Spring 1954

VENTURE

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by DR. LESLIE A. FIEDLER

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by DAVE LAROM

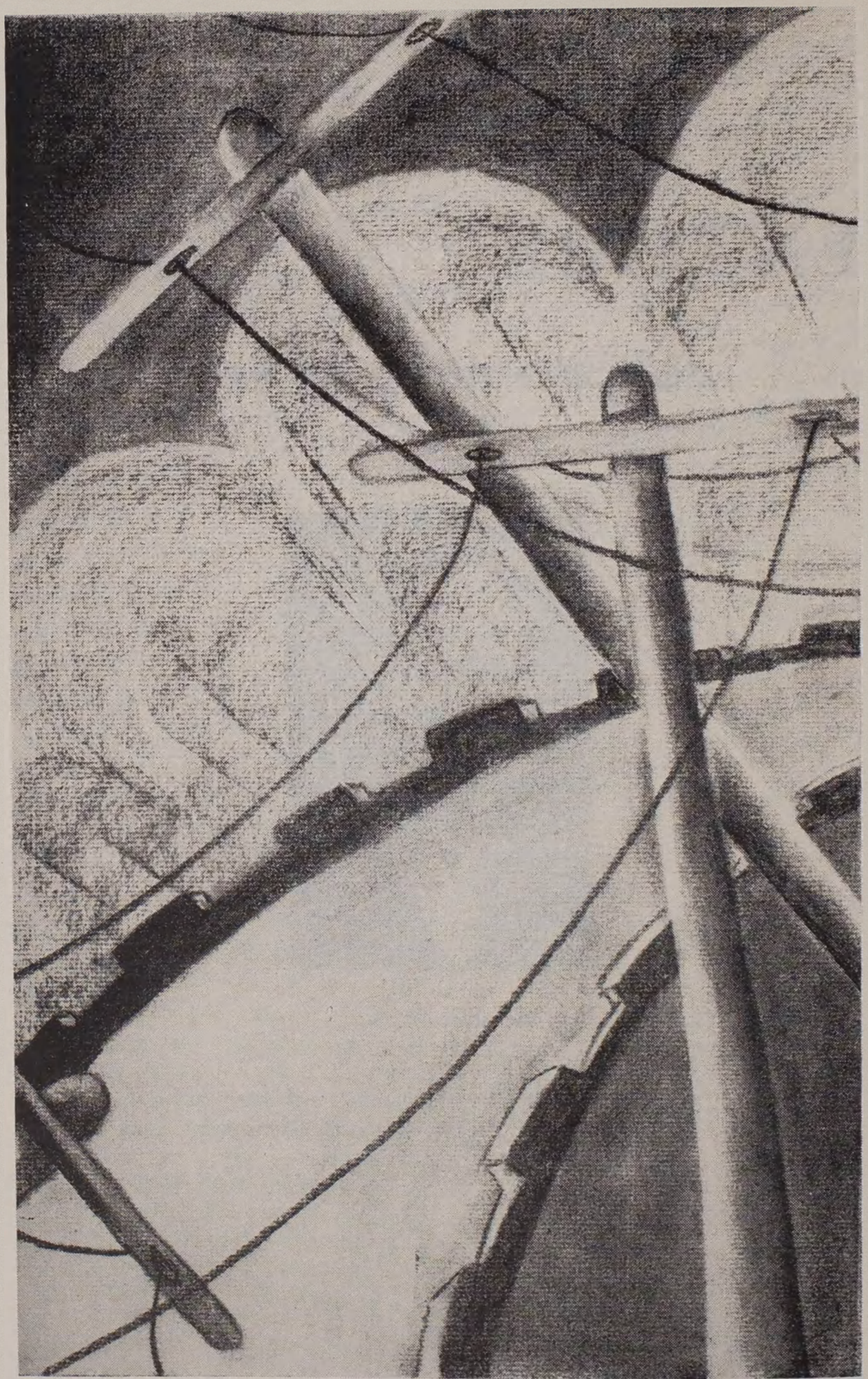
Montana State University

VENTURE

dedicates this issue to . . .

Mrs. Mary B. Clapp

Who since 1921 has served education and letters at MSU in her teaching, in her poetry, and in her person.



by Jeannie Moe

Charcoal Drawing

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To the reader:

It looks as though something of a renaissance in creative writing is taking place on the campus. As *Venture* ends its second year the editors are able to pick and choose material, and even to start building a backlog of manuscripts for the future. Nine manuscripts were submitted for the Stearns short story award—by far the largest number in recent years—and the number of students in various creative writing courses from freshman through the graduate level has increased considerably.

Those who are serious about writing and can be here in the summer will have an extra chance for stimulation and manuscript criticism during the Writers' Conference which runs from July 19th, through the 24th. J. Frank Dobie, author of many books about the West, will handle nonfiction; Alan Swallow the poet and editor will run a workshop in poetry, and fiction will be taught by Walter Van Tilburg Clark and Jessamyn West, one of America's leading novelists and short story writers.

Actually, no conference in the country can offer a more distinguished staff. It is an opportunity which has brought in the past students from places as far away as Maine and Alaska. The important thing for us to remember, then, is that it is free to M.S.U. students. It is an opportunity for professional help from some of the finest writers in America.

H. V. L.

VENTURE

Published by Associated Students of Montana State University.

Volume 2 Spring 1954 Number 2

A Poem

by Jeanene Schilling

Miss Schilling is a junior majoring in modern languages. She is from Missoula.

As a young tree is carefully watched,
Pruned to the desired shape,
So am I with you.
I feel myself stripped of any irregular branch,
Snipped here and there
'Till I am straight and symetrical,
Hesitating to open a new leaf or display
A half-hidden one lest the painful pruning shears
Of your disapproving glance should cut
And leave me wounded and bleeding.
Oh my vigilant gardner love—
Let me be myself, let me grow freely.
Disregard the imperfections, the scrawny twigs
of my being
And leave me an unbound, independent spirit
That I may love you more for fearing you less.

Mitchell vs. the Time

by **William N. Dehon**

Mr. Dehon is from Great Falls and is majoring in bacteriology and hygiene. He is a sophomore.

EARLY-morning sunlight streamed through the venetian blind into the dimness of the room, casting long slashes of light and shadow upon the bed and the foot-worn rug, its cool brightness stirring activity in the adjacent rooms of the motel. Noises of car doors and crying children filtered through the thin walls, and over them the sounds of nature waking up.

The alarm went off 10 minutes too soon. Mitchell awoke, knowing that it had been set for 8 a.m. sharp and muttering to himself because he felt cheated; conjuring pictures in his mind of a day thrown into confusion by the mechanical mistake of a cheap clock. The idea of vacationing by a schedule disgusted him. He had taken two weeks off with the intention of breaking the routine he had fallen into so blindly with his work. He felt a piquing resentment toward his wife, who had insisted on the trip to Florida, and it was she who had conceived him that a guided tour would be "the ideal way to see *everything!* We won't need to worry about accommodations because the Greyhound people take all the responsibility of finding hotel rooms and places to eat."

So far, the trip had been just what he had anticipated . . . he spent most of his time consulting the schedule and his wrist watch instead of seeing what he had come to see.

He had slept fitfully, exhausted by the bus-trip of the day before; nettled by the summer heat and the sweaty sheets. After shutting off the alarm he moved sleep-blindly gropingly to the wash stand and out of habit turned on the shaving light with his right hand, with his left, put the plug into the basin and turned the "cold" faucet. Dipping his face toward the pool of water, he lifted it in his hands and rubbed it onto his face and around to the back of his neck. Then dripping and without wiping himself he moved to the bed and his sleeping wife.

"It's time to get moving."

She stirred, regarding him with sleep clouded eyes, not comprehending.

"It's five after eight," he said.

"Yes. All right. Would you pull that blind, please? The light's too bright."

While pulling the cord of the blind his eye was arrested by the tour schedule lying on the nightstand by the bed. He picked it up and regarded it closely in the now-dim light that filled the room.

"Well," he said. "Well, according to this thing we have a free day here. The big swamp isn't far away and I think we should give it a look as long as our time's our own, for one day at least."

"That's fine. There isn't much else here except the beach."

"No. The schedule recommends the beach, but I'm getting sick and tired having them tell us where-to-go-when . . . The swamp would be interesting, if it isn't taken over by tourists. We'll go eat and then see if we can't find a car or a bus or something to take us over there. It's 20 miles . . ."

He pulled the towel from its rack and wiped his face, almost dried of its own accord, and proceeded to shave.

AFTER dressing, they made their way to the restaurant located a block from their room, and ordered breakfast. Here Mitchell found the opportunity to lose his temper once, because of a waitress who seemingly ignored him, and nearly once again, because the cream had curdled in his coffee. The incidents verified for his wife the fact that he was in a sullen mood. She knew from experience that he would undoubtedly remain ill-tempered for the rest of the day.

After paying the check, they began their search for a means of transportation. Their first stop was the bus terminal. Mitchell spoke to the young lady at the "Tourist Information" booth.

"Is there a tour bus from here out to the swamp?"

"No sir, I'm sorry but the tour of this area does not include a visit into the Everglades.

Regular tours are conducted from Miami. The local tour includes Las Olas Beach, the Colee Monument, Hugh Taylor Park, the Anthropoid Ape Foundation, the . . ''

''Thank you,'' he said, and walked back to his waiting wife.

''Why is it that information clerks never know anything? I simply asked her if they had a bus out there and she took off on a list of places a mile long.''

They stepped through the revolving door into the heat and the sunlight.

The Chamber of Commerce office was eight blocks from the bus terminal and Mitchell was forced to stop twice for directions. After reaching his destination, he was further infuriated by the attitude of the young man in tropical worsted who vainly attempted to answer his question.

''I'm sorry, but there are no regularly conducted tours to the swamp from this point. However, from Miami . . .''

''Now wait a minute,'' said Mitchell, red of face from the heat and the frustration within him, ''if I could just find a car.''

''Automobiles are available at a car-rental agency two blocks down on the same side of the street.''

Mitchell turned to leave.

''And incidentally sir, if you're taking U. S. Highway 27, you'll find a settlement at South Bay where they offer boats and guides for fishing and hunting excursions.''

''All right,'' said Mitchell, and left.

At the car rental agency, after paying the deposit and filling out the necessary forms, he was handed the key to a '49 Chevrolet that waited parked in front of the building. The walk from the Chamber of Commerce office had heightened the color of his face, but upon receipt of the key to the car, his mood quieted somewhat. His wife sensed the change in him but her relief was tempered by a vague feeling that something more would happen to send him back into the former ugly moodiness, for the day was still young, and the heat increased steadily, glaring from the pavement of the street and the dazzling white shop fronts.

''Well, at least we've got transportation,'' he said. She sat silently beside him as they made their way back to the motel. ''We'll eat and shower and then get moving. I'd just as soon get some shut-eye this afternoon. I had a bad time sleeping last night.''

''But we've got the car now . . .'' she protested quietly.

''Now don't get put-out. I was just thinking out loud.''

BACK again at the room, he opened the door and was struck by a wave of moist heated air, hotter yet than the atmosphere outside. As he entered, the clock sitting on the night-stand attracted him with its loud, irregular ticking and he commented on it to his wife.

''It's 12:30. We'd better hurry if we're going to get to see anything before sunset.''

''I really can't see the point in rushing around like this. After all, we *are* on a vacation.''

She sensed that she had said too much, that his anger would now be quick to rise and meet her protest. But he said nothing. He checked the retort on his lips and silently glared at her, as if daring her to push the issue further. He remained motionless for an instant and then moved to prepare himself for the trip.

The drive from the outskirts of the city was boring. The land around them was flat and green; covered with a profusion of vegetation of all sorts, spawned by the life-giving rains that were frequent during the spring and early summer. The air pouring through the open windows of the car smelled of the growing plant life and the stagnant pools of water standing near the road.

''You can tell it's marsh land.''

''Yes,'' she answered.

It took only a short while to cross the twenty-mile stretch between the city and U. S. 27; Mitchell drove fast because of his impatience and the heat. He turned north at the junction of the highways.

The land had changed in appearance now; fields of tall yellow green grass spread from the highway into the distance, nearly to the horizon. Clumps of willows and short jackpine dotted the land. A profusion of tall trees could be seen, dividing the earth and the sky, tinted blue by the distance and the summer haze.

MITCHELL drove steadily on for nearly an hour, saying nothing. He toyed nervously with the sun visor and the rear-view mirror. There were no signs of habitation. The highway stretched on before them mile after dreary mile.

''Where are all the sights we're supposed to be seeing,'' said his wife.

"How the hell should I know!" he exploded, his lips twisted now with the anger which, smoldering steadily, ever rising, had finally found a release. "We could drive all night and never see a thing. Of all the silly ways of spending your time. . . . We should have stayed home and stuck to the damned schedule. I should have known . . ."

"It wasn't my idea," she snapped.

"What do you mean? This whole stupid affair was *your* idea! I've never been so bored in all my life."

The automobile slowed to a stop on the flat level pavement.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm turning around," he yelled. "What's the sense in going on? As it is, it'll be dark before we get back." He grunted as he spun the steering wheel, and the gears ground as he set the car in motion.

The headlights cut a bright white arc across the face of the motel building as Mitchell swung the car onto the gravel parking court. He stepped to the ground and slammed the door, swearing while he hunted his pockets for the key to the room. His wife followed him in and flicked the light switch beside the door casing. The sight of the open suitcases on the bed and the clothes strewn about as they had left them earlier in the day depressed her and filled her with a feeling of futility, almost of hopelessness.

He turned and stepped back out into the darkness. She heard his footsteps crunch on the gravel.

"Where are you going?" she called.

"I'm taking the car back. It's costing us, you know, every minute we have it."

"The agency won't even be open," she pointed out.

He did not reply.

As she shut the door the distant sounds of the city faded into nothingness. The room was filled with a palpable silence, broken only by the clamorous ticking of the clock. She stood quietly, staring at it with unblinking eyes.

Pavanne for a Dead Master

by **Robert T. Taylor**

Mr. Taylor is from Butte and is a graduate student in the School of Education.

FOR A time when I was eighteen, I couldn't decide whether I wanted to be a concert pianist or a biologist. I soon made up my mind, but for a while I took lessons from old Sebastian Kronmiller. Almost no one remembers him now, and very few people knew of him then. He had been retired for several years and most of his playing had been in Europe. But we had some records, a couple of Chopin Etudes, some Beethoven, and my mother remembered that he had been a pupil of Lizst. Kronmiller didn't have many pupils, and he accepted me readily after I played for him.

Kronmiller lived in a little house out in a suburb, so it took me a lot of time to get out to him. I used to read as I went, sometimes getting off the bus a few blocks away in the spring and walking through the quiet, sunny streets, full of houses pretty much alike, neat, and well-painted. I walked slowly sometimes in the sunshine and looked at the children and the lawns and the dogs and the birds and thought about them and about life and dreamt a little as one will do at 18. His house was just like the rest, small, neat, surrounded by grass, a few bushes against the house, a fence around the yard. The gate always stuck a little.

Kronmiller was a lean, tall old man, his face creased and a little browned, his eyes very bright and keen. His hair was almost a silver white, always carefully brushed into place. His appearance was always neat, precise, with none of the neglect and shapelessness that seem to characterize the old. Always he smelled a little of shaving lotion or a cologne. For me, though, his hands were his most impressive feature, the one which I remember best. They were not large hands, although the fingers were long, the knuckles a little knobby. Tapered, they were like hands carved from light wood or ivory, and I loved to watch them move over the keys. His hands were separate and yet they were a link

between him and the piano, living connections between the man and the instrument he played, which could unite them into one. One knew that it was not his fingers alone which played, but his mind and his soul. Yet his hands were beautiful in themselves.

FROM the beginning, I think, Kronmiller knew that I didn't have what it takes. Oh, I had a pretty good technique all right. I could get through most of the Chopin Etudes and the Beethoven Sonatas and a few virtuoso pieces by Lizst. That is, I could play the notes, but something wasn't in me that a great musician has to have. I'm no Darwin in biology either, but that doesn't make so much difference. Kronmiller listened to me play; he gave me pointers; but he didn't try to pull out of me what I didn't have. Sometimes he would grow tired of listening, and then he would play for me or talk to me, especially toward the time I stopped taking lessons. Maybe in the long run his talking and playing were more important. It has always seemed so since.

He was a fine talker just as he was a fine player. He was English, not German, and his speech had a light English accent, a kind of precision that went with his appearance. When he didn't want to play, or when he couldn't because of the periodic stiffening of his fingers, the reason he had retired, then he would talk to me in the quiet afternoon, about a number of things as I remember, but mostly about music.

HE HAD a fund of anecdotes, which he told dramatically and well, about musicians mainly, about Chopin playing Bach before concerts (Kronmiller had never heard Chopin, of course), about Lizst, especially about the late great years at the *Hofgartnerei*, that royal gardener's house in Weimar where Lizst held court for "pupils" and the mobs who came to see the old Abbe with the sly eyes and well-cut robe, the women who came to sit at the feet of a man who had shared some noble beds in his day. Kronmiller made them live as I cannot, dozens of them, some of them dilitantes, some fools, some fine musicians like Weingartner and Jossefy, Moritz Rosenthal, Smetana, Bizet, all of them under the frowning eye of Von Bülow, who had married Lizst's daughter and lost her to Wagner and who now seemed to fear losing the father as well. Called up like spirits, they lived in a world now dead, a world that could never again be as it was then. And he had not forgotten, he said, in those years, that Bach too had once lived in Weimar, although this did not occur to many who had been drawn there by the power of a magnificent technician and a vast charlatan.

He spoke too of performances he had heard, of Strauss conducting, of the rare performances of Debussy. He spoke of what he had himself played, of triumphs, of disappointments. He spoke of playing Brahms with Mahler, the Opus 83, when he had a temperature of a 104, when he could hardly hear himself or the orchestra in a haze of weariness and illness. He told of triumphant concerts in Vienna, in Paris, in London, in Brussels, of what he played, of how he played it, of what men he had met, of what women. I would sit fascinated until the room began to grow dark, and I would leave in the early evening and be late for dinner at home.

WHAT he told me came to him naturally, unforced. Sometimes a piece of music would call up to him a host of images, of memories that he would relive, puffing gently on a pipe that always required relighting a dozen times an hour. One day, for example, I had played a sonata for him, the opus 110 by Beethoven. He smiled quietly to himself and motioned for me to leave the piano and sit down. He knocked the dottle out of his pipe and began talking.

"You are very cold, my boy, like so many who are young. A curious thing, that youth, which should be hot and full of fever, should be so cold, so timid, so conservative of emotion. You don't *know* what that sonata is. It is soul, feeling, a man. I can recall that I was like that too, but I was cured in a way that I never forgot and never shall forget."

He lit his pipe. "I was kind of bad on the last movement," I said.

"O, it isn't a matter of technique," he said. "That's what I've been saying. Beethoven is more than technique, but I too didn't always know that.

"One night when I was 22 years old, I gave a concert in a town in southern France. I was a cocky young devil, and I gave a full display of showpieces. It was the last in a series of concerts, and I was tired of travel and glad to be through. Even so, I could still feel a kind of thrill whenever I played. I was good that night. I played them Lizst, some of the poorest Chopin, which I played with the excesses of the time, and even a little composition of my own, an artillery piece based on a little thing from Schumann's

Kinderscenen. I carried them off with energy, with verve, and I went off stage feeling as though I had won a victory of some sort. They called me back, again and again. I was no longer tired. I was exhilarated, filled with strength, and with a longing for adventure, some fitting climax to that evening."

THE CLOCK struck four-thirty, and he waved an arm vaguely at it, as though at some intrusion. His pipe had gone out, and he held it in his hand.

"When the crowds had left me, I changed my clothes and went once again out to the stage, now dark except for a single light, and looked out at the empty theater. From it came a hush of silence, almost—how can I explain it—almost like the applause of ghosts, the applause of all those who had sat there through the years and had gone away. There is nothing like an empty theater, nothing, especially for the young and the romantic. When one is older, one hardly cares.

"When I came out at last, a man was waiting for me. He spoke my name and handed me a card. On it was the name of a woman of whom I had never heard, and three words in a precise, beautiful hand, 'Come to me.' "

The old man smiled.

"Was I a fool? It could have been a joke; it could have been something more sinister. But I went. It was an adventure, the very thing I had thirsted for. I threw my cape confidently about my shoulders, got into the *voiture* which he indicated, and we set off. He said nothing to me, and I nothing to him. He might have been Charon himself, but I did not care. It was a lovely night, and I was young and excited. A three-quarter moon made everything shimmering, mysterious. We headed into the country after a bit, and I could feel the breeze in my face, the smell of the spring night; I could hear the cry of a night bird. Every sound, every sensation, pulsed through me, became part of me.

"It was not a long journey. At last we came to a large house set far back from the road and separated from it by trees and a long garden. My heart beat rapidly. I smiled in the darkness as we clattered into the coach path. I had been called by a woman and I had come. What was she like? Fat, middle-aged, the kind that too often seek out the young and the talented? She could not be; I felt it in my bones. I believed in dreams; I believed in mystery. I was already half in love with a vision I had never seen."

HE PAUSED to light his pipe. The afternoon sun now lay across the piano which dominated the room, lighting the fine wood, caressing the deep green rug. He blew some smoke into the air and it sifted and moved in the sunlight.

"She opened the door herself," he went on. "And I saw her for the first time She was a lovely woman, older than I, in the full richness of mature beauty which some women achieve and thrive in, which some never achieve. She was tall, not slender, but strong, graceful, womanly, lithe. She had a peculiar ivory skin, which the blackness of her hair made seem more delicate, more precious. Her eyes were dark brown, rich, intelligent eyes that met mine frankly and equally. Her gown was beautiful, low in the neck to reveal the soft lines of her neck and shoulders. She wore a single cameo on a delicate platinum chain. About her was the faint savour of a perfume, exotic, light. I caught my breath in an ecstasy of pleasure looking at her, admiring her, a woman so lovely that one could see her loveliness only, could not think of her as a woman that one might want, might possess. Yet I smiled with outward calm and bowed with a gravity I did not feel.

" 'It was so good of you to come,' she said in a lightly tinted English. I looked at her in surprise; few people actually knew that I was English.

" 'I could not resist,' I said. 'And I am happy that I could not, very happy.'

"She smiled at me. 'I have heard you play several times,' and she named three concerts that I had given. She led the way into another room, from which glass doors led out into the garden, now bathed in moonlight. I watched her move with delight, with joy at the grace of her body, the perfection of her movement, like the measured and symbolic gesture of dance. There was a piano in the room. She stopped and indicated a lounge and I sat there. From a crystal decanter she poured two glasses of wine and handed me one. Then she sat beside me.

" 'Your beauty,' I said, lifting the glass and looking into eyes. In the candlelight her face had shadows and a changing loveliness that captured my eyes.

"She smiled, almost sadly. 'No,' she said. 'Not my beauty, your future.' I looked at her in silence and sipped the wine.

" 'I want you to play for me,' she said.

"I started. 'Nothing could give me greater pleasure,' I said. 'Anything.' " You understand that my repertoire was not so large that I could honestly make that vow, but I felt superb and godlike. The wine was excellent too.

"I walked over to the piano and struck a minor chord. She put a piece of music in front of me, and I looked at it in surprise. It was very simple, an adagio from one of the Beethoven sonatas. Anyone could play it. I swept through it with what I considered some feeling, and then I looked at her where she sat by the piano, her eyes fixed hauntingly on my face. Her eyes filled with tears.

"Can you imagine how I felt! I felt like weeping too, for sheer love, for pride too perhaps, for the hunger of the loneliness that I had had so long, that I had hidden in a fury of work and pleasure. 'It was for you,' I whispered.

"She burst into tears. 'It was horrible,' she said. 'Terrible, impossible! You played it even worse then you did that battle music at your concerts. You cannot play the piano; you can't play at all. You are a machine. All that skill wasted on a machine.' Her tone was infinitely sad.

"I sat there astonished, hurt, feeling stupid and silly and much too young. Then I became a little angry, and a little afraid.

" 'Play it again,' she said. Her voice was icy.

"My fingers were wooden. I had been cheered. Lizst had nodded his approval. I played it again for her. She swore at me and her eyes burned with hatred. She called me a suckling babe, a mewling child. I played it again. Then her loveliness entered my soul like the music itself. I stood up quietly and blew out the candles one by one. The moonlight filled the room, and beyond the doors I could see the garden, silent, beautiful. I sat again at the piano and I felt her hand on my arm. 'Play it again,' she whispered. 'Play it for me.' "

KRONMILLER laughed quietly and set his pipe on an ashtray.

"Well, I even missed a note that time, but I played that adagio for the first time, I mean really played it. And when I finished it, I felt exhausted and yet terribly happy, because something that had been missing before was given me, something I had not missed had been supplied, and I was somehow new, reborn. I felt her hand on my shoulders and very gently our lips touched, very quietly.

"I stayed with her a week, and it was a week of fire, of work. Her husband was to return then from a trip in Italy. You look surprised, John. Yes, she was married, happily too, to a man who was very understanding, very good. What was between us was a kind of love, but a love like the love of the beautiful, or the love of the true, or the just, or the good. It was—one might say—Platonic, if you will not misunderstand, Platonic like Bembo's lovers should have been. We kissed and there seemed nothing lacking to complete our happiness. And it was, as I said, a week of work, work such as I have never known before. God, how I played! Beethoven, Bach, Haydn, Schumann, Scarlatti, even Mozart, whom no self-respecting virtuoso even admitted existed. And I played with fire bursting out through my fingers, because I loved her with my whole heart and at last I was whole. She was beautiful and exalted, and she made me feel somehow noble and exalted too.

"She taught me to play music, and I have never forgotten the lesson she taught me. The week was like a dream, and when it was over, I went home, to England, and so complete had been that time, so full, that I did not even miss her, partly because so much of her lived still inside me. We were not conventional lovers; we were so much more. I can see her this moment as she will always be, never changed, never older or tired or common, but beautiful and part of me.

"She taught me something wonderful, that woman with her beautiful hair and her ivory skin, her wonderful, crystalline soul. She taught me the meaning of music, and of life; she taught me that music is meaningful to the lover only, to the whole man or woman, to the soul and mind. She once said something that I have always remembered. She once said, *'Avec la science et l'amour, on faire le monde.'* With knowledge and love one makes the world. I said it to myself as I played, not Lizst now, but Bach, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, a new Chopin. From that time I was truly alive."

His eyes kindled.

"The next year," he said, "I met my wife, and that earlier love that I carry with me never interfered with the love I had for my wife. There are many kinds of love, you know."

I DIDN'T know what to make of the story, because things like that didn't seem possible in my world, but that didn't mean that they couldn't be. Truth is a strange and fugitive thing.

Finally I decided that I wanted biology after all, and I left for college that fall. Kronmiller didn't seem much moved by my leaving, but he suggested that I come to see him if I ever had time. I promised that I would.

When I left him for the last time, he said to me, "My boy, you are very proud, very proud, but that is all right if you have something to be proud of. But you will not be whole until you learn love too, for man is not a mechanism, a machine, but a soul, which can starve on knowledge alone."

It was that winter that Kronmiller died, and he got a little write-up here and there, short articles in the musical journals, because he had had his modicum of fame, and he had been one of the last pupils of Lizst. Most people read these carelessly, I know. Memory is a fragile monument. I decided that when I came home, I would have to tell his wife how sorry I was. In the year I had taken lessons from him, I had never met her.

Well, with one thing and another, I didn't get out to his house again until a vacation in the spring. I got off a bus a few blocks away, just as I often had, and I walked to his house, with a few memories tugging at me, feeling the warmth of the sun, smelling the new growth of grass and trees and flowers. I went through the gate, and it stuck a little as usual. Everything looked just the same. Just the same.

I walked up to the door, and then I stopped. Within I could hear the sound of the piano. I recognized what was being played, poorly, childishly. It was an early piece in that book that so many students over so many years went through before the age that frowns on the exercise, Clementi's *Gradus Ad Parnassum*. I smiled a little, remembering the pretentious title. I rang the bell. The playing stopped.

The door opened, and I caught the distinctive odor of the house, a mixture of cooking, of smoke, one of those ineffable distinct essences that each house that is lived in has. It brought back in a flood the afternoons of music, the afternoons of talk. The woman at the door was short, quiet-faced. She spoke softly.

"You wanted something, young man?"

"Yes," I said, suddenly for some reason self-conscious. "Are you Mrs. Kronmiller?"

"No," she said, "I'm Mrs. Engel. Won't you come in?"

I followed her into the house, into the familiar room. The book shelves, the stacks of music, the familiar sunlight through the windows, everything was as it had been a year before. The piano still dominated the room. A woman was seated before it, a small woman, old, with quick, bright eyes. She smiled at me.

MRS. ENGEL put a hand on her shoulder. "This young man came to see you, Catharine." She spoke as though to a child.

The little woman looked at me in surprise. "O, I was just practicing," she said in a rather shrill voice. "I have been practicing all day." The words seemed to glitter in the warm room as the sunlight caressed the deep green rug.

"That's fine," I said awkwardly. "Mrs. Kronmiller, I wanted to . . ."

I stopped because of the peculiar look on her face. It was still smiling, happy, blank. "I have been practicing," she said. "All day." She looked beyond me and then a look of startled fear crossed her face. She seemed to draw into herself.

"O," she gasped, "Where is my father? My father said he would come to me. Where is he?" A sound almost like a whimper came from her grayish lips.

Mrs. Engel put a hand on her shoulder. "There, there," she said, "You've done enough for today." She put her arm around the old woman and led her from the room. I didn't know quite what to do, and I stood there for a few minutes. After a time, Mrs. Engel came back and smiled at me.

"She is sometimes worse, sometimes a little better. It is just a matter of time for her," she said.

"Has she been that way long?" I asked.

"About two years," she said. "She doesn't know her husband is dead. She doesn't know she ever had a husband. She lives somewhere in the past, somewhere close to childhood."

"Thank you," I said. "I'm very sorry."

I went out then, and I could hear in my head the exercise from the *Gradus*, a work for children on the long road to playing the piano, the long road to life, that all of them took one way or another. I thought of old Kronmiller then, of his

fingers, and I thought of the thousands of fingers that must have played those exercises, and then I thought of his fingers lying together, forever quiet, never to play again. His wife, dead too in a way, took forever the same road to Parnassus, the treadmill of life, in a past that the world could not follow her to. I looked at my own hands. I could hear a fragment from the *Gradus* in my head.

I walked out into the street, into the sunlight. But man is not just a machine. *Avec la science et l'amour . . .* how did it go? I thought of old Kronmiller and his love and his wife a child, both of them living on something from the past which sustained them, the past where they were young and breathed and lived, though one was locked from there forever and the other would soon be. I thought of his hands and the sunshine, and I felt a touch of mingled fear and sadness, loneliness, thinking of all the hands which had made music, good and bad. I put my hands in my pocket, but I was conscious of each finger. I started to walk down the road, past the familiar houses, toward the bus stop, back to where I had started out. It was warm, a lovely spring day, and I felt a great darkness about my heart and in the midst of the darkness I felt something much like love.

End of the Moon

by **Barbara Knight**

Miss Knight is from Billings and is a sophomore majoring in liberal arts.

Song of the wind ash
Sliding down the branch of the red-berry tree
Rustle of night breeze
Through slippery needles of the mountain larch,
Touch me.

The conscious moon of the old, dying grass
On the granite steep
Holds the tight buds of sleep aloof
And the eyes of dark pry open paths of fear
I keep.

Hands of the earth
Climb brick in the black still
While I wait—still—on crest of the foreign thing
Then the call of a creature half tame by the light
Enters my corner of life making
The kill.

Now the moon and the tree huddle together
And under the glow fast fade.
The mountain sounds
And I sleep but not till the haze of morning collects
Dispersing the shade
of night.

Kiss

by **Barbara Knight**

The pine,
kisses a cold
cloud
on the
mouth with green lips.

They cuddle
together in a
tumble of branches
and wisp.

Then the grey cloud
breaks the embrace
taking its leave
with a shrug.
It greets the waiting
cool wind and
a hug
commences.

Rose Red

by **Mary Ken Patterson**

Miss Patterson is from Missoula. She is a senior majoring in English.

Whiteness, and black and red. Corners and flatness, with shadows. And whiteness. And whiteness.

I hear her footsteps. I cannot look, but I hear the tap, tap. Then the black hair and the red lips. And the whiteness.

Today there is more. There are eyes. Dark eyes, and looking at me. Why didn't I know there were eyes? Round and edging upward outside, at the far end. Then slanting and crinkling. They're smiling. Of course, they're smiling.

Red lips, one lip moving. The bottom lip moving:

"You seem to be a little better this morning. Is there anything you would like me to bring you?"

The eyes are round again. At attention. About face. One, two, three, four. One, two, three, four. Moving whiteness. And the flatness.

Now brown and gray. Four eyes, round.

"Can you hear me, Lieutenant?"

"He seems to be looking at us, doesn't he?"

"Can you hear me, Lieutenant Wright?"

Can you hear me, Lieutenant Wright. Lieutenant Wright. I am Lieutenant Wright. I hear you.

"Better talk to Kennedy."

"Check Anderson first."

One, two, three, four. Only the solid flatness. Only the whiteness. They were talking to me. What were they saying. What does it mean. Rose red, with the black hair and the red lips and the white! Tell me. Wipe my forehead, my neck, my arms. Tell me, Rose Red, of the fairy tale. Don't leave me again. Wait. For God's sake wait.

"He seems to be conscious. But he can't hear us.

I hear you. I hear you.

"Let me try to talk to him. Lieutenant, do you hear me? Can you answer me? Look at me. Do you know where you are? You're in a hospital, but you're not wounded. You've had a bad shock. We want to help you. Can you talk to me, John? Can you hear me?"

John. Lieutenant John Wright. I hear you. But what do you say. Rose Red, what does he say. This man all white.

"This isn't doing any good."

Now I don't hear. Only your white back . . . moving away. Come back. Rose Red, come back . . .

"Good morning. You hear me today, don't you, John? The Doctors are coming soon. You've lain there a long time, many weeks. But today you recognize me, don't you John? I know you do. That's good Lieutenant. Will you hold my hand, John? No. Hold it.

"It's no use doctor. No response."

What are you saying. Black and red and white. What are you saying. You look at me. Round and open. And the white one . . . looking at me:

"We've brought someone to see you Lieutenant. Do you recognize him? Stand in front of his eyes, Sergeant. He won't move them to look at you."

"Ho, there. What's the big idea, Johnny boy. Don't you even know old Ed."

Ed Crowley. Good to see you. God, it's good to see you.

"Doesn't seem to know me, Doc."

But, I do know you. I hear you now. And I know you. What is it? What am I?

"Keep trying. There's something in his eyes."

"Listen Johnny boy. You remember ole Ed. You and me's seen a lota action together. Remember the time . . ."

Why do you look at me like that. Why can't I I talk to you. Sure I remember. That, too. Ha ha ha . . . look. I'm laughing. O course I remember that . . . you old . . .

"Keep talking, Sergeant. I think he hears you."

Why shouldn't I hear him. Tell him so. Nothing. Control's gone. I can't do it. Nothing. No movement. Nothing works.

"Okay, Sergeant. Tell him about it."

"You sure it's okay, Doc? You sure he won't . . ."

What, Ed . . . what?

"Remember what happened, John? Remember what happened back there. Remember you and me? Remember us going ahead . . . us and Reesberg and McCauly . . . reconnaisance . . . Remember, we heard the planes. Remember them planes . . . and the bombs. Then we crawled back. Remember . . . we crawled back. Doc, I . . .

"Go on . . ."

"Remember the mess . . . Jeez, the bloody mess . . . the bodies . . . Thomson . . . Look, Doc . . . he's cryin'. His face ain't movin' . . . and he ain't making a sound . . . but them tears. He's crying.

It's easier now. Movement and understanding. Eating. Closing my eyes. She's always here. I can see her now. But I like the black and the red best . . . and the whiteness . . . even the whiteness. I'm learning to write . . . notes. Shaky, but she understands. They say I'll be talking soon. Almost a new world. She wants me to write Sharon on the white paper. But I always write my name. Like in the fairy tale. Maybe I'm the bear that turns into a prince charming. They say I'll just start talking some day. Soon. I try all the time. All the time. But I know what I'll say . . . I know what I'll say when the words don't stop in my throat before they have a chance to come up. I know what I'll say. "Rose Red."

I Hear the Telephone Ringing

by **Ambercrombie Shrdlu**

This author not only showed orginality
in his poetry but also in
his pen-name.

I hear the telephone ringing, the strident notes I hear,
Those of Alexander, each one sounding its brrrrng as it should be, loud and strong.
It rings when I measure my coffee, just a *point* as it should be,
And half the spilt grains fall on the counter, and the rest into my shoe.
It rings as I sit in the study, about to make ready for what passes as work,
Or it may ring as I stand, half afraid, my hand poised above it,
Wondering who it is and afraid that I know who it is,
And shouldn't answer, but if I don't, then it may not be who it is,
But someone else that it wasn't after all.
I hear the telephone ringing what it will bring to me and to no-one else.
It rings what it will bring to my day, a party of headaches,
And a score of small interruptions,
For it is more interesting and more diverting often than the voice it carries.
I hear the telephone ringing, and I think I'll have it taken out.

Closing Summary of the Indian Affairs Institute

by **Dr. Leslie A. Fielder**

(From April 27 through 29, the first Institute on Indian Affairs in Montana was held on the campus. Initiated by the students of Dr. Harold Tascher's Community Services laboratory, a great deal of the work of running the institute was done by these and other students. Visiting members on the staff included Miss Venita Lewis, welfare specialist, U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., and Miss Henriette Lund, welfare consultant of the National Lutheran Council, New York City; members of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Montana, representatives of the various tribal councils in Montana; members of various departments of the state government in Helena, and a group from the M.S.U. faculty. Because this institute was run largely by the students and because many students were unable to attend during class hours, the Editors of Venture take pleasure in printing the final summary of the Conference as delivered by Dr. Leslie A. Fiedler.)

I am called upon to stand before you and speak at a point when all of you, I think, are, on the one hand, weary, ready to go home, and on the other, eager to be done with talking and to get down to action. I feel doubly under a handicap because I consider myself poorly qualified to speak with authority on any aspect of the subject in hand. I am not an economist; I am not a sociologist; I am not a doctor, a nurse, a government employee, a welfare worker; I am not even an Indian, full-blooded or breed. Perhaps, after all, my chief qualification is that I have no qualifications, that I am the sole representative of the ordinary man present, at least so far as this problem is concerned. I will confess to you that professionally I am a teacher of literature, or, as I prefer to think of myself, a humanist, that is, someone who is interested in man as man, in his total humanity, and in all the problems which bear on that total humanity. It is the general problems of men living in a community and their attempts to solve these problems which concern me. And it is only insofar as the Indian problem is one of those problems, that I make any claim to speak about it, if not with interest, at least with passionate concern.

Certainly the Indian question is for us in Montana and for Americans in general even more deeply than most questions involved in the total complexitities of our community life. I hardly have to remind you, although I think nobody has specifically said it today, that not so long since, the problem about which we are talking this afternoon we attempted to arbritrate by force. It is worth noting with some satisfaction that people who could once confront each other only on a battlefield can now sit down side by side to talk.

I shall not speak in my summary remarks of the economic and social aspects of the question with which we are dealing, although I would not deny that there are such aspects and that they are of overwhelming importance. I merely confine myself to commenting on what I consider to be within my competency. I should like, that is, to reflect for a little while on the guilts and the obligations, on the moral issues that have arisen out of the betrayals, the wars, the sudden and inexplicable changes of course, the breakings of promises and the makings of new ones which have marked the relationship between us and the Indians thus far in our history. (I should like to say in light of a demand made earlier today, that when I use the word "Indian," I mean it to refer to anybody who considers himself an Indian. This by-passes the problem for me at least and suffices for my purpose). . . . Surely the hatred and the resentment that exist in the minds of people on both sides of this issue and especially the wounding of the human spirit that has resulted from them is of critical interest to all of us. Insofar as the Indian problem is an *economic* one, it most immediately concerns the Indian who lives under unspeakable condition, and whose need to have that problem solved for him is much more urgent than any we can feel. But insofar as this problem is a *moral* one, it is first of all our problem as non-Indians. So long as the Indian lives under economic and social

conditions which are disgraceful, that disgrace is our disgrace and we must face up to it.

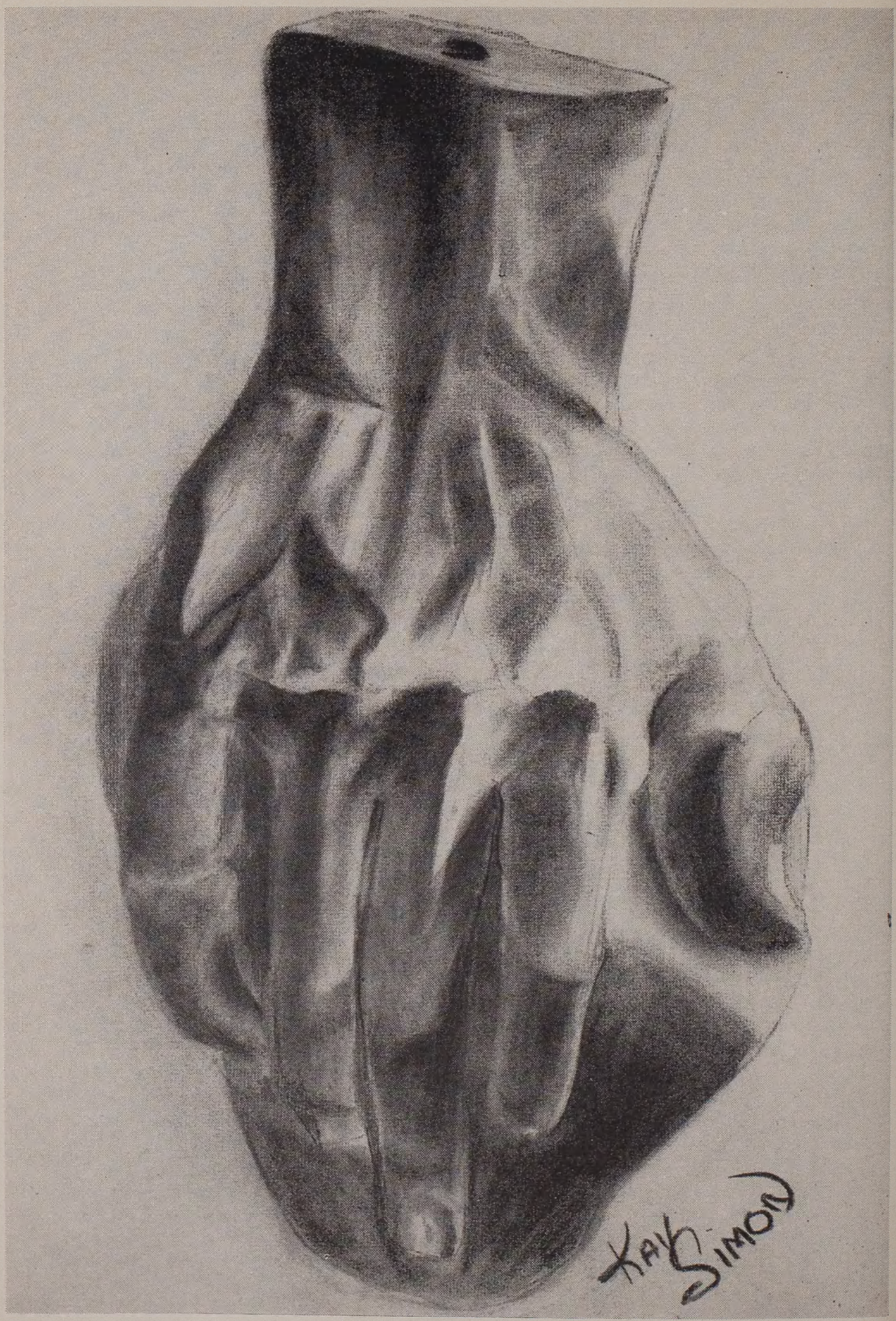
I think that this conference has been of a special value in allowing some of the tensions and difficulties, some of the feelings of resentment and dismay which ordinarily lie beneath the surface of our life to escape into the open and to be expressed frankly. I hope you will not think that I am a lover of conflict for its own sake if I say that it is the emergence of these conflicts into daylight that has pleased me more than anything which has happened at these sessions. I remind you of what you all must know, that in a strange way we have tended to come to the issues which are really disturbing us at the *end* of each session. Day by day, and session by session, and even considering the conference as a whole, this has been true. We pass only reluctantly beyond the expression of sentiments which are meant to smooth over and not really to expose the issues which disturb all of us, and God knows there are plenty of such issues! Besides the one which has been talked about a great deal, the fact that for one reason or another the policies of the Indian Bureau stir disagreement and resentment on almost every side, from Indians and non-Indians alike, there is also the deeply underlying resentment, the historical clash, to which I have already referred, between the Indians as Indians and the whites as whites; there is the conflict which arises between federal employees and local employees dealing with the same problem; there is the misunderstanding which stubbornly persists between the government worker who is concerned with what he thinks of as "technical" and "down-to-earth" aspects of his problem, and the sociologist or anthropologist who considers the government worker a "plumber," trying to deal with moral and spiritual issues as if they were technological ones.

There is a further difference which underlay much of the discussion here, but which unfortunately never came very clear, between those of us who are assimilationists and those of us who are pluralists: that is, between the people who think that all Indians, whether they like it or not, should sooner or later be forced, urged or induced to adapt themselves to the competitive system under which we live and to take upon themselves our codes and values; and the people who believe that in our sort of democracy it should be possible for several kinds of cultures to co-exist, so that many Indians at least can choose forever to live in terms of the tribe and the relationships bred by the tribe. One of the most comical and saddest statements I have ever read in my life, I came on in the report of a member of the Indian Bureau who complained about the difficulty of teaching "these Indians" to say "I" instead of "we." If the Indians want to say "we" from now till the end of time, I should think they have the right to do so even if all the rest of us choose to make the assertion of the "I" an essential value of our lives. There is, finally, the conflict between those who advocate withdrawal or termination and those who would postpone either for a while or indefinitely such a policy.

The chief value, to me at least, and from my point of view to all of us, of this conference has been the coming into daylight of these disagreements which unspoken merely rankle, but expressed openly are a sign of mutual trust. You know, there is a certain point, when a group of people attempting to open a dialog are still hampered by a lack of faith in each other, "Oh, it would be useless to say what I truly believe, because nobody would listen to it!", they think, or "Why should I bring to the surface the things which really concern me when nobody here *really* wants to do anything about it?" And so, insultingly to each other, we swap platitudes back and forth, and refuse to talk about the matters which we fear divide us forever. But it is only when we get to the stage, which I think we were reaching toward the end of this session, that we realize that the open confession of precisely what divides us is the sole method for bringing us truly together. That we have attained this stage is an indication that we are at last at the point of establishing a true community among ourselves, that we have come to believe in the possibility of changing each other's minds, and, most difficult of all, in the possibility that our minds may somehow be changed. I do not know whether anything we have said here will, in the long run, influence legislation. I do know that an apparatus has been set up which will carry much further the deliberations which we have barely begun. But this conference has a value in itself, and would have such a value even if nothing further were to develop. That value lies in the fact that as a group we have made the effort of finding our minds and our hearts, or better, a common mind and a common heart, the symbolic mind and heart of the people of Montana, who only by such discoveries become a real community. In forming such a community, I think we

heal or begin at least the process of healing the old wounds which fester under the surface of our social life. I dare risk repeating once again what so many of us have already repeated, because it is these words which echo in my mind; and it is on this that I must close if I am not to betray my own sense of what these sessions have really meant. They are the simple cry of several Indians, "but we didn't *know* we had so many friends!"

The revelation of the feeling of loneliness, the sense of combatting a hostile community which this cry betrays was for me a touching and moving thing; and gave me a certain reassurance that a beginning had been made in convincing some Indians that theirs was not, a lonely cause, hopelessly maintained in the teetz of the entire white world, but was the common concern of themselves and many of us to whom *their* problem seems ours. Insofar as this conference represents such beginnings, it is good for the Indians and also for all the rest of us; because we are all, I think, in a sense oppressed with notion that we are somehow alone, that in our innermost vision of what is just and right in society we must fight *against* always rather than with. And if the final impression these sessions leave in our minds is the sense that in these matters no one is ever alone, it will have been worth the occasional boredom and despair that rose in our hearts at the speakers who disagreed with us or who seemed unredeemably beside the point. In religious terminology, the feeling of oneness has been expressed in a phrase which I think, which I *know*, that not I nor any one can say better. But what has been said once and for all must be learned over and over, as we have learned here once more, not for the first or last time, that we are all members of each other.



Charcoal Drawing by Kay Simon

Sonnet

(for GERALD MANLEY HOPKINS)

by **Hank Larom**

Mr. Larom is a sophomore majoring in English and is from Missoula.

Trapped in ice, we are freed by vision
Bright beyond the glacier and brought, Oh,
So swiftly to thy holy world where rhythms
Pattern splendor, rending for sheer song
The cold air, asking only eyes to see creation
In tongue and tear, leaves in silver throng.
Oh, singer, let us look a while, not hasten
Back because of lacking sight of God.

This sweetly ordered universe is scarcely seen
And never grasped, for loving it is not enough.
In time we turn to colder cliffs of reason'd
Truth, frozen firm in world of rough
Rude doubt, and may, some day, return
If Christ wills and empty soul doth learn.

Our Boys

"Those idiots are investigating us again."
. . . T/Sgt. James E. Frawley, USMC

by **Hank Larom**

Committees bold would like to know
Where innocence has ever fled,
And ladies leagues impassioned cry
Asking where the dreams do go.

Devoted men shed no tears
For better world or distant pleas
And soldiers see in retrospect
A shattered scene the mother fears.

Ladies grave, there is no way
To lend to war a compromise,
So keep in trust your apple pie
And pray for those you would betray.

One Point of View

by **Ann Gorman**

Miss Gorman is a sophomore majoring in education and is from Billings.

THE PURPLE hat said, "I want a hot turkey sandwich with that salad with the red dressing. I don't know what you call it but . . ."

"Yes M'am and hot tea?"

"I think so, and I'll have that baked ham sandwich with the . . ."

"But didn't you say hot turkey?"

"Oh . . . oh yes, I guess I did. Don't forget my salad with the red dressing."

"Yes, I know, you'll get it. (She'll get it all right, right in the wrinkled rouged sweet face. Oh well, isn't it 'bekindtooladiesinpurplehatsweek.')

"Miss, miss, could you bring me some real fresh cream for my hot water?"

"Coming up, sir. (All I need now is a cow with a built in separator and cooling system.) Here you are. (And clank there's your soup, clunk there's your salad, clank clunk there's your steak, tinkle there's the grand finale plus the rustle of a check for a curtain call. Don't forget the smile and don't pick up the tossed pennies till the customer leaves.) Howdy and what are you going to have tonight?"

"Wal sir, have you got any of that creamed chicken this evening?"

"Sure do." (Old codger, he looks as happy as a horse getting an extra ration of oats.)

"Bring me some of that and a couple of them hot biscuits with bee's honey and some soup and some coffee."

"Will do." (Bee's honey. Where does he think honey comes from: Hornets) There's your soup and you better eat every bit of it. (Oh lord, why do old men bring out the maternal instinct. Second childhood they say. I guess he does demand that bee's honey as regularly as a baby demands a bottle.)

"Yes sir, what can I do for you? What did you say . . . ? Would you mind repeating that? Oh . . . (Remember the customerisalways right. Adapt yourself to his personality. Geth I canth talth fru my noth awong with duh beth othem.) What do we have for 10 thenths . . . I mean 10 cents . . . no, no donuts, all gone, kapoot! Howth about, excuse me, hows about a dish of ice cream? O.K. (Aha, all stalls, I mean stools filled, all the occupants fed, watered and blanketed down with a check. Now for the rest of the chores . . . Dum de dum de dum . . . make roadtarbatteryacidjoe-Java, fill the sugar troughs, set out some salt blocks and pour some poor farmer's pepper snuff. Puffpant, time for a cigarette . . . Is that footsteps I hear . . . did I say time for a cigarette?) "What do you want Mr.?"

"TELL the cook to gimme some graveyard stew."

"Well . . . all right. (Graveyard stew . . . hmmm, sounds interesting. Let me see now, use the old imagination. No cemetaries around here, all stalls alive and squirming. Maybe a cup of coffee . . .) "Here you are sir, graveyard stew complete with a spoon for shoveling sugar and a cup of a coffin! (He doesn't seem to think that was very funny; everybody else is laughing. Some people just don't have a sense of humor.) What's that sir? . . . but . . . but I thought . . . milk toast! But I don't see the connection."

"Never mind, bring me my milk toast."

"Yes, sir. (Feels rather warm in here. All I can see is ghosts sitting on tombstones dribbling milk down their sheets.) "Here's your stew. (Smile bravely. Let them think it was all a joke, that you knew all along. Why don't they call it barnyard stew; the old goats dribbling most of the milk down his beard.) Here comes the red hat with the giggle and 'deary fix me up a hamburger on one slice of bread and a lettuce salad with my special dressing and some coffee' or maybe she'll have number 4 breakfast tonight. Seems to have acquired quite a passion for pancakes lately.) "Hello, how are you tonight."

"Ooo . . . hello. You know I'm not very hungry. Don't you think hamburger would be good for me and have it put on one . . ."

"Yes, I know how you want it and some salad and some coffee . . .

"NOW. Ooo . . . how can she be so cheerful. Must be that hat selling environment of hers. Take a farmer though, he isn't noticeably cheerful when it comes time to feed the pigs and the pigs aren't very cheerful either; just empty bellied and squealing.) "Hello Mr. R. . . . Got the refrigerator cleaned and. . . . (Too late. There he goes, peeking under the ketchup lids for any bloody drippings, searching for dust under the napkin holders, trying to see his face in the juke boxes and asking the customers if everything is all right like an agent from the Humane Society. Does he think I beat hungry animals? Here he comes back; inspection seems to be over.) "Yes Mr. R. . . . no Mr. R. . . . of course Mr. R. . . . I'm not sure Mr. R. . . . right away Mr. R. . . . (And so long Mr. R. . . . I'll be seeing you under the ketchup lids in my nightmares Mr. R. . . .)

"ARE YOU going to eat now fellow farmer? You are? Sure, go ahead, I'll manage fine. (Sure, go right ahead and me with no coffee, a thousand desolate dirty dishes and thirty million new animals squawking like crazy hens in a barnyard with only one rooster to keep them happy. Sure, go right ahead.)

"Coffee M'am? Yes sir. A nickels worth of pudding? Ham and eggs coming up. Real oysters in the stew? Honey for your biscuit. Scrambled sardines?

Pot pie . . . pot pie . . . pot pie
Coffee cream . . . coffee cream . . . coffee cream
Tea and pot . . . tea and pot . . . tea and pot
Bangcrashboom . . . bangcrashboom . . . bangcrashboom
Thank you sir . . . thank you sir . . . thank you sir.

(Am I going crazy? Everybody is twins from *Brave New World.* Oh for some soma! Whats that noise? Aha, all the twins are getting up and filing out. A new batch hasn't been hatched yet. Change the menus and bring on the alfalfa salad . . . ; here come the cattle mooing to be fed and milked of their money.)

Yes sir . . . yes sir . . . yes sir
soup . . . salad . . . desert . . .
soup . . . salad . . . desert . . .
more coffee . . . more coffee . . . more coffee
Hup two three four . . . Hup two three four
Eight thirty . . . nine thirty . . . ten o'clock!

(I'm off! Grab coat, off with apron and out the door. Stop at a cafe near the bus stop for a sandwich.)

"Miss, would you please hurry with my coffee and bring me some more cream and water and don't put any lettuce on that sandwich."

Two Persons and Depth

by **Thomas Lindeman**

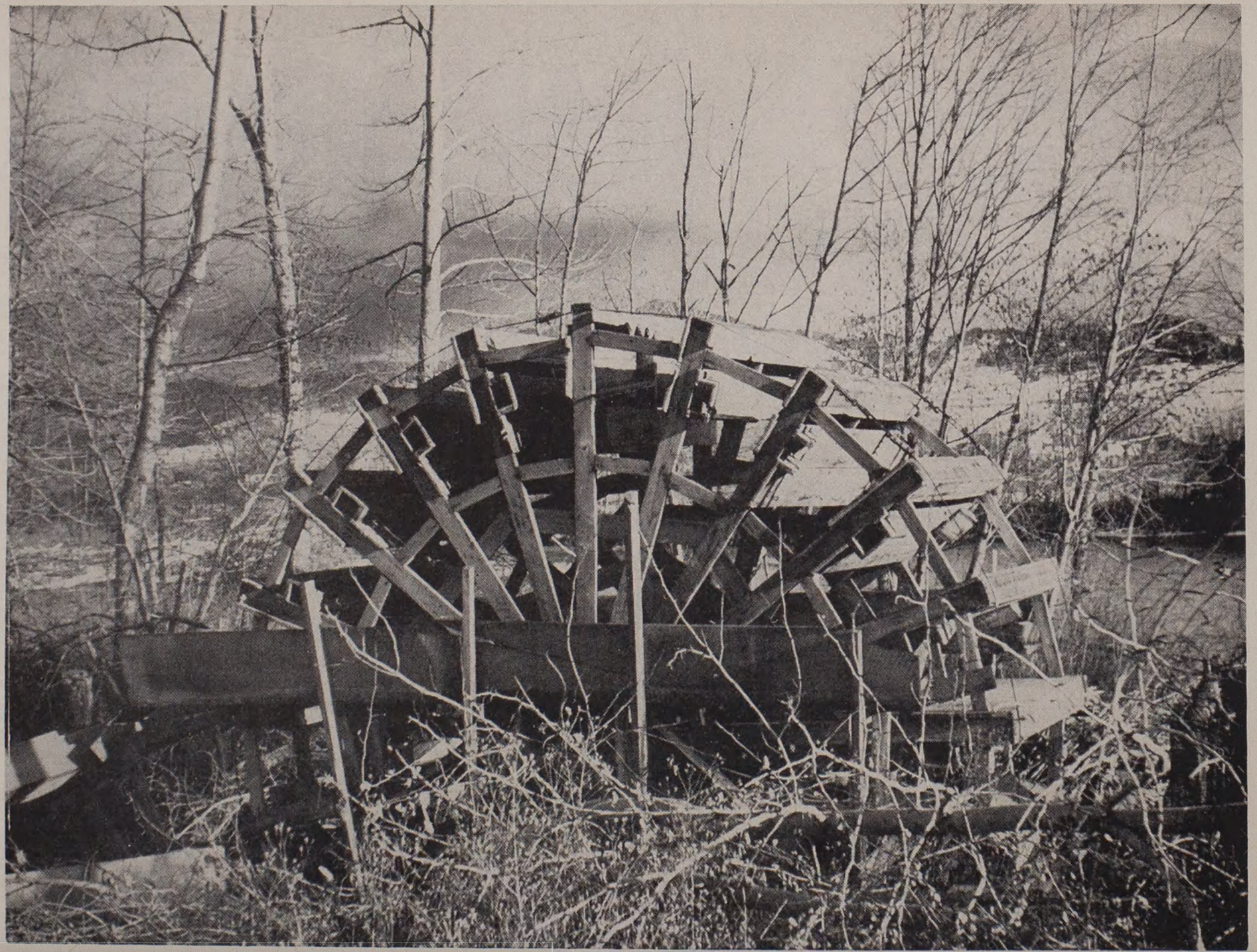
Mr. Lindeman is a senior majoring in history and political science. He is from Billings.

And you—
Do you feel that I go down into the depths?
Or do I just know of them,
See the roots but never grasp them?
Do I know the fire of a prophet?
And can I feel the peace and purging,
The so-aloneness,
The soul-searing of the Depth?

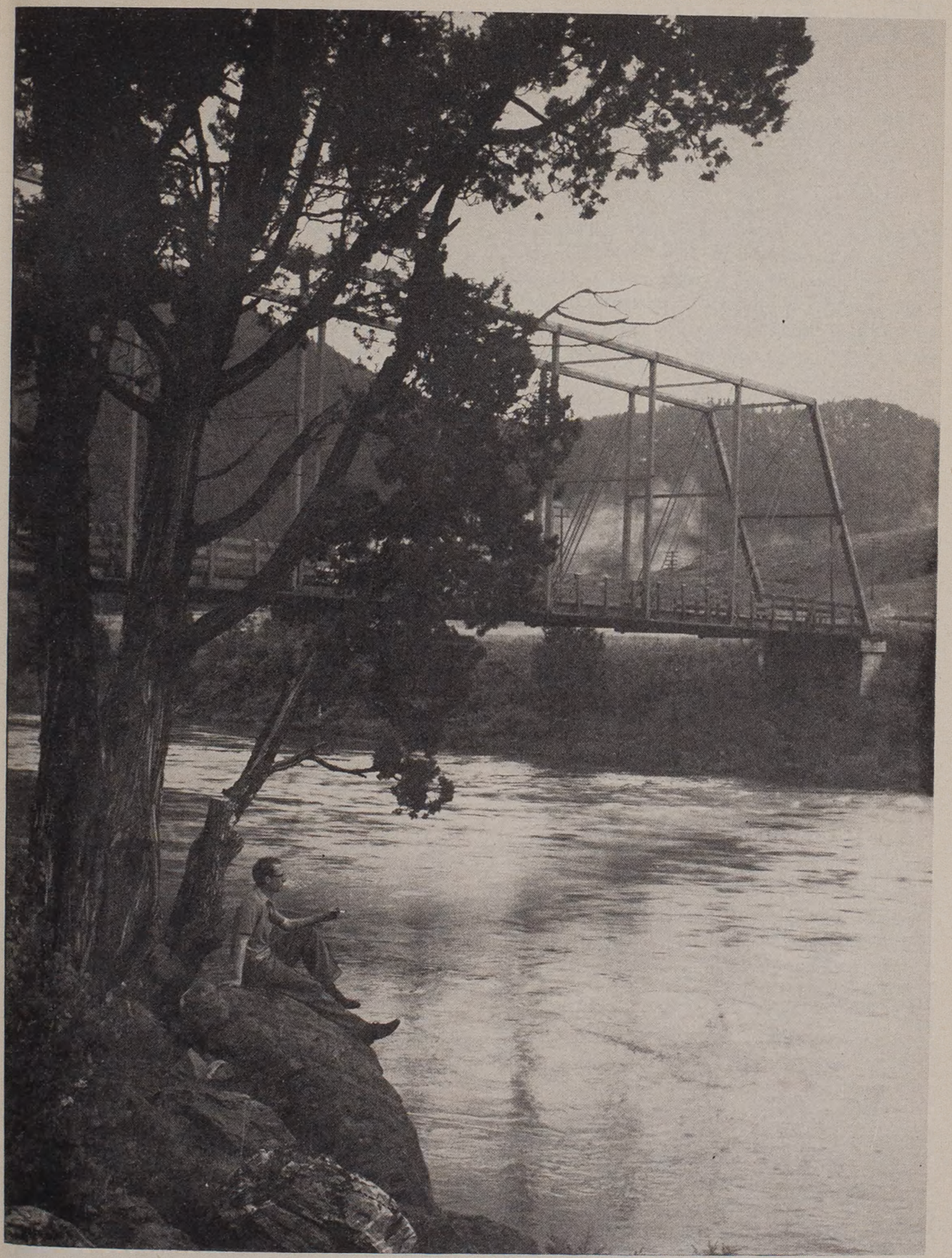
If so, how can you let me near,
And hold me off?

You know—
And thus you can not love me.
It tears me to understand that.
Let that sorrow whip and burn me,
Let it carve deep within me,
Until I have the depth to understand.

Then Love is not yours to withhold.
It is the Depth.



Water Wheel by Malcolm McGregor



by Glen Chaffin

Pondering

The First Commandment

by **Dave Larom**

Mr. Larom is from Missoula. He is a junior majoring in anthropology.

THE HALL leading to the back of the church is long and narrow. The floor tilts crazily from one side to the other, and as I walked down it like a blind man, I stretched my arms out using them as guides. I paused before the battered door to the sacristy and knocked timidly.

There he sat, Monseignor Kits, the most powerful "medicine man" on the reservation. He was greater than the God of the earth, or of the hunt, greater than all the spirits put together and the Indians knew it. He always reminded me of a Christianized "Buddah," his flowing vestments, his pendulous cross of polished gold, great jowels folding over his stiff white collar, his bulging stomach which dwarfed his muddy riding boots, and finally, two limpid blue eyes that seemed to reduce his grossness to a wisp of black cloth.

"Come in, come in, Father Burke, sit down. Something has been called to my attention which demands immediate action on our part." This was his usual tone, whether Sam Yellow Horn had fathered his fourteenth child or little Jimmy Broken-Water-Bag had stolen from the offering again. He sighed a long rasping sigh and continued.

"I have been here 15 years, 15 long, tedious, unrewarding years with these red devils, and never has our task, our great task of bringing God to these primitives, seemed so hopeless." The old priest was worked up more than I'd seen him in the two years I'd been on the Skull valley reservation. Maybe the pulpit had been stolen for firewood or the choir leader had gotten "lickered up" again.

"Burke, do you realize that half, half of our Indian converts have foresaken us after almost 50 years? Almost 50 years?" Father Kits had a way of repeating himself, each time a little louder as if he thought you were deaf or thick headed. This was the technique he used when lecturing the Indians on God or Sin. They usually just nodded their heads up and down, looking very grave and understanding.

"You, Burke, you must find the reason. You are the youngest emissary of God here, and the strongest . . . the strongest . . ." He trailed off for a minute, then continued, his limpid eyes burning blue as an acetyline torch. "These heathens have returned to the Idol. A strange idol. To a type of mind-deteriorating drug. A narcotic in the form of an herb. A narcotic . . ." The last word crackled like the sound of burning pine needles.

"Yesterday I talked with Joe Hawk. He told me that most of the long-hairs head for the hills three or four times a month; to a huge Tipi, where they worship this heathen God for eight solid hours at a time. Eight hours! It was all we could do to get them to church for one hour a week. It is our duty to bring them back to reality, back to God and the Church . . . back to God." His voice faded. The word, "God" was spoken in a vast cavern, hollow and lonely.

"Father Kits." I spoke quietly, not wishing to stir up this volcano again. "What would you have me do? Whatever you think is best, is fine with me." My voice brought him back.

"You, Father Burke, go with Hawk and attend one of these meetings. Gird thy loins and partake in the ritual. Show them you are a man of God, a man as powerful as who or whatever it is they worship. Show them that, as an emissary of God, you are able to render their idol insignificant and minute. Be the missionary among the savages, if necessary start over, convert them all over again, all over again. . . ." Suddenly, Father Kit's office became still and the ring of his words echoed through the ancient framework of the Church, whispering in the eaves and echoing from deep within the corroded organ pipes.

"All right, Father Kits, I'll go as soon as I can get a guide. Hawk would be the best and he'll probably go with me. Will that be all?" The Christian Buddah just nodded, and with a long sigh he settled back in his chair. I left him, his blue eyes far away, suddenly blank and emotionless.

Father Kits was a strange man. At times he seemed ignorant and bull-headed, and yet deep inside, there smouldered a determination, a power possessed by few men, to create an energy focused on God. For this, I greatly admired him.

Dry weather had set in, and as I started out in the dazzling sun, determined to find Joe Hawk and get to the bottom of the affair the wind whipped up a stinging spray of sand, howled around the town's few gray buildings, battered with a thousand stone fists the false front of Jay's Oasis, and whirled on down the street, accompanied by several bounding tumbleweeds. It died abruptly with a parting whisper, and settled a fine powdery dust, covering everything.

I crossed the street and pushed through the Oasis' door. A hushed, apoligetic silence greeted me.

"Good morning Father Burke," the bartender offered. "Somethin' I can do fer ya?" The

cigarette smoke was thick and mingled with the stale odors of beer and grease and dried cow dung. I scanned the long bar, a row of faces, some ashamed, some blank, many of them innocent, and at the far end I picked out Joe Hawk, who was hiding behind Sophie Pierre, without doubt the most sinful of Skull valley's female inhabitants.

"No, nothing for me, John, just want to talk with Hawk. Joe, would you mind stepping outside for a minute?"

"Sure, Father Burke." Joe gulped half a glass of beer, belched and slid off his stool, smiling good naturedly at me.

Joe and I had been good friends since I first met him. Two or three times he had been caught poaching, and I always managed to get his fines cut in half. Money is scarce for the Indians, and to Joe I actually *was* a God-send. He spent most of his time hunting or tanning skins in his little shack up on the side of the canyon, at night or during the very hot weather he could be found in the Oasis drinking beer and on Sundays, as a kind of favor to me, he attended church and confession.

At the Indian dances Joe's tall figure, dressed in handsome buckskin, could always be picked out; he was the most energetic, the most skillful and the proudest. One could easily detect in him the pure strain of his Indian forefathers. He was still in many ways a savage, but I knew he would do what I asked of him because an Indian never forgets a favor. At first, he seemed reluctant but when he finally agreed, I was almost sure I detected a faint look of pleasure, a smile in his eyes as we made plans for departure.

Two nights later, I followed closely at Joe's heels, and though younger by several years, I expended twice the energy and seemed to stumble continually over small boulders, hidden snags and tearing branches.

There was no moon, no shadows, just a deep inky gloom that blackened the narrow trail and sifted hrough the giant pines like a mist. For an hour the two of us climbed hills, crossed table lands which seemed like shadowy seas, and clattered precariously along talus slopes of fallen rock. Finally, we came into a small clearing flickering with erie light. In the middle stood the largest tipi I have ever seen. It must have been 20 feet in diameter, its long poles stretching to the sky like numerous black fingers.

I admit this was impressive, very real and ominous and for a moment I faltered. I felt like an intruder, but then I suppose so did the first missionary who observed this alien, primitive type of worship.

As we neared the tipi several figures appeared. They all seemed old, and yet young in their tenseness. I couldn't identify any of them, and no one seemed to notice me. I heard a few gutteral Indian words and Joe reached behind him, grasped my wrist and led me toward the tipi entrance. Never before had an Indian led me or even touched me—yet there was firm authority in his manner.

We lined up single file before the tipi entrance; first a tall man, who held a large fan made of eagle feathers, then two more Indians each holding similar but smaller fans, then three "long-hairs," all women, then Joe and lastly, me. A weird group. Light from the fire within, flickered on them magically reminding me of Lucefer's evil companions plotting to overthrow God somewhere deep within the bowels of the earth.

We stood quietly for a minute, and then at the flip of the tall man's fan, we entered, walked clock-wise around the inside of the tipi and finally sat down in a circle before a cresent of gray sand, about five feet long and six inches deep. Behind this was a small fire, built in the shape of a pyramid.

Each unwound a brightly colored blanket and spread it on the ground. Feeling quite self-conscious and almost obliged to produce a blanket, I shifted my vestments so they would flow out around me.

Near the fire hovered Sam-Lone-Bear, the first face I recognized. I didn't know him well, though he sang in the choir at church, in a fine tenor voice which we had missed for several Sundays. He carefully avoided my eyes, and busied himself placing tiny twigs in the coals of the pyramid fire. With a magic puff, the flames leapt up to the surrounding sticks, and the whole pyramid blazed. Sam looked directly at me grinning broadly, black ragged teeth gleaming, his eyes, red in the glow of the fire were defiant and challenging. Then he raised his tenor voice in a high-pitched, nasel Indian song, his eyes rolling to the heavens.

Three men sat in front of us, directly before the crescent shaped alter. The tall one rose slowly, brandished his fan and stalked out. The others remained motionless, gazing steadfastly into the fire.

I began to feel uneasy. Probably because of my uncertainty of what was taking place and what was expected of me. "Joe?" I whispered softly, "What kind of nonsense is this?" He leaned towards me very slightly.

"Listen now, Father Burke, listen and then we talk no more. The one who walked is the "Leader," he is monseignor here. In front of us is the drummer, and beside him is the "Cedar Man." The one who watches the fire is call "Fire Chief." You must do what I do, and when you can stay no more, get up and walk out. Say nothing."

He leaned back, his face stoney, eyes glued to the fire. A gust of wind made the tipi tremble, the flames became fierce, lashing at the air and then died again, leaving the atmosphere dark and tense. I began to sweat.

The leader entered with a small can of water which he splashed on the ground. Then he lit two sticks of incense and carefully placed them on neither end of the alter. I shuddered and lowered my eyes and for the first time I knew I was afraid. I found myself facing the unknown. Joe seemed impersonal, Sam-Lone-Bear's grotesque actions were unlike anything I had ever seen in a human before, and this lonely tipi seemed lost in a black wilderness. It was all dream-like, almost unbelievable.

The "Leader," with brief gusto brandished a leather sack over the alter, first to the east, then west, then north and south. With long brown fingers he seemingly drew the smoke of the fire to it. He crouched by the alter and from the sack he extracted a light-colored root, looking something like a turnip. He carefully placed it in a small depression before the alter. Then he pivoted and passed the sack to the Indian nearest him, who took out four of the roots, and passed it on around the circle.

The "Cedar Man" rose and turned facing us and instantly the drummer began his beat, a fast high pitched pounding never heard at any of the dances or stick games. It was a frantic sound, an alien sound, not white, not Indian, something altogether different.

The leather began to sing in an almost falsetto voice which for some reason, held me spellbound. The words were repetative, mostly Indian, partly English and without change in pitch. Gradually they began to have a meaning for me. The Indian word mingled with the English, and eventually by listening to the tone, or slight emphasis I began to interpret, or perhaps evaluate, the verses into a very simple, unrhyming sort of monologue which I shall never forget. It was something like:

"Oh Peyote, we call upon you
To give us power, to give us power.
Give us your strength, your wisdom,
Give us a vision, a vision
Take from us, take from us
All that is bad, all that is evil.
Oh Peyote, we call upon you.
Give us power, give us power."

The song seemed to go on and on, vague, and repetative and desperate. I became so transfixed, I could hardly move a muscle. The words "Oh Peyote" rang in my head until I could scarcely distinguish between the voice and the pulsating of the drum. Suddenly they stopped. Silence crowded into every inch of the tipi and hung there, motionless and deafening.

I was snapped back to reality by Joe who was passing me the sack. "Take four and eat," he hissed. I looked to my left and everyone was

eating rather hurriedly, heads bowed in an old attitude of prayer. The one first in line suddenly convulsed and vomited in a coffee can which he passed to his right. He started eating again, and gagged some more.

I lowered my eyes, and contemplated my four roots. So this was peyote, the pagan relition, the worship of a root, a drug full of evil and of power to move men's minds away from the Church. I was being watched. I could feel the expectancy, the waiting. Father Kits' words came to me—"participate . . . gird thy lions . . . convert them again. . . ." I wondered, if Father Kits knew, would he expect me to chew on these roots, risk losing my senses, allow a drug to control me? Would it be my duty to God? I felt the sweat pouring off my back and I had to concentrate to hold on to those four roots. I felt as if a cinch was tightening around my stomach, again the unknown was staring in my face. I closed my eyes, trying not to shake and prayed very hard, then I raised some of the roots to my mouth, bit off about half of it and started to chew. At first it just seemed extremely bitter, but as I swallowed, my stomach ach throat constricted causing me to gag horribly, and it took all my will power to keep from vomiting as wave after wave of nausea swept over me, warm and sufficiating. It seemed to pass as quickly as it came, and as I began eating my third root the taste seemed almost delectable.

I believe it was at this point I first began to feel light-headed. I remember looking around watery eyes, and perceiving that each Indian was taking a turn at singing with the accompanyment of the drum.

A hand reached out of nowhere and the warm coffee can was handed to me. Without looking I passed it back. I was not going to be sick, I thought. I could eat this peyote with the best of them. I'd show them what a man of God was capable of.

At last it was my turn to sing, and I confess that with this song, my eyes closed, my mind left reality and my tongue would not answer my thoughts. I remember raising my voice triumphantly and singing confusidly something like this:

> "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name. Give us this peyote and transgress not thine powers—for thine art the sheep of our pasture—"

I am not sure now long I continued this insane prayer because I lost all contact with reality and entered into a dream world.

At first, I felt as if I had fallen a long way into a pool of colors, very bright, almost blinding. They seemed to swirl about me taking forms which gradually became recognizable. I was mildly surprised to discern myself, seated in the tipi surrounded with gaily colored blankets. I remember watching excitedly as I rose and sauntered easily out the door, across the clearing and into the woods. I seemed to be drifting rather than walking; at any rate it was effortless. The sun was bright, and the trees and the mountains and the valleys blended into a glorious mist of pastels, of coolness and yet warmth. Each leaf, each blade of grass was vivid and lush, and each was blended into something else, a kind of montage of the senses.

Tiny droplets of glistening beauty whirled about my path and I drifted with the ease of a soaring hawk in the noon-day sun.

I watched as I glided out of the big timber into a cool meadow, aflame with blending colors. I kneeled and accompanied by the whispering wind in the pines I prayed to God in the scene that stretched before me. I prayed to him in the mountains, in the vast plains, in the grandeur of the woods. I prayed to evertyhing, and then from out of the hills came a very little man. He couldn't have been over four feet tall. He was dark, but his features were soft and uncertain. He wore a brightly beaded smock something like my own vestments though it barely covered his buckskin leggings. His eyes were faded brown, and in them I thought I detected apoloty. We talked and walked for hours through the meadow, time seemed stalled and the pleasantness of the colors and the little man's conversation made me feel warm and good inside.

Finally, he turned, waved and disappeared. With him went all the colors and sounds and warmth. It was just as if someone had torn a hole in this vast painting, and dark nothingness showed through.

I believe my eyes had been open for some time before anything registered. I kept closing them, longing to return to the meadow of colors and the little man. It was like waking up from a dream that you enjoyed, and then closing your eyes to recapture it. Strange, but I could not remember one word that the little man had uttered.

Gradually, an empty tipi, and a crude and sand alter materialized in a gray dawn. The

ground was cold and dew covered, and nothing but ashes remained of the fire. Outside I saw figures moving around flames and I smelled food cooking. I started to get up, and lurched crazily into the sand alter where I remained for a minute. My head felt as if it were splitting several ways at once, and I realized I was experiencing the depressive effects of the drug. I began to evaluate more clearly what I had undergone. To the Indians, such a drug must have a strong appeal. They probably derived greater vision from it than I could and fewer recations. By ridding their bodies of the billious quality, by regular use of the poison, they had found a fine and exciting substitute for God and Christianity. I was able to see the cause and effect, and perhaps the approach to make them better understand God. Dizzily I got to my feet, and staggered out to them.

They were all eating, huddled around the fire in the cold dawn, occasionally talking and chuckling.

"Listen to me you heathens!" I roaded. I teetered a little, took a breath and fought down the urge to vomit. "I have seen your Peyote. I have witnessed your colors. You crawl to this tipi every week, pray to a pagan God and eat a vile drug." They had stopped eating and seemed to be listening closely. "We led you from this kind of wilderness to God and the Church. We gave you tools and taught you to use them. And you answer us by returning to Idol worship even more primitive than before. Peyote, like all things, is a part of God. But, in eating a root which contains a drug you sit with the devil! Forsake this wilderness, gain back what you have lost." I glanced at their faces. Some were serious, some thoughtful, and Joe Hawk was smiling. He winked and nodded his head solemnly. "Sunday," I continued, "you must all be in church, there will be a high mass. God is forgiving, and understanding. You have nothing to fear." I left them, striding off down the trail, my stomach churning, but my heart exuberant. I felt I had saved these children.

When I reached the mission I staggered to Father Kits' cabin and related what had happened. He listened wordless until I finished. He stared at my filthy vestments, unshaven face, red eyes and dazed expression. "Fine Father Burke, fine. Well done. Now get some rest. I have been praying very hard for your success. Very hard." With these words I went to bed and slept for almost 13 hours.

The days that followed were busy ones. Extra care was taken in preparing the sermon, a great deal of talk on my exploit, and I spent several days in bed recuperating from the poisonous roots.

Sunday came, and hardly an Indian appeared for mass, and not one for confession. I didn't wait to hear from Father Kits. With my heart in my mouth, I started out for the tipi. It was dusk, the lull in a long summer day. The mountains were sharp and jagged, and somewhere, way above the valley I heard the lonely night hawk crying to the winds. My heart was heavy, I knew that little man, little Peyote had won.

It was dark when I got near the tipi, a strong wind blew out of Skull Canyon; a crescent moon was climbing behind the whistling Ponderosa. A few feet closer and then I heard it, carried by the wind. The high-pitched song of Peyote moaned through the timberland, across the valley, and echoed from the moonlit mountains:

"Oh Peyote, we call upon you
To give us power, to give us power.
Give us your strength, your wisdom.
Give us a vision, a vision.
Take from us, take from us,
All that is bad, all that is evil.
Oh Peyote, Oh Peyote, we call on you,
Give us power, give us power,
In God's name—the Father
the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

I kneeled in the woods to pray for their souls.

The Door

by **Joan Hoff**

Miss Hoff is a freshman majoring in journalism. She is from Butte.

THE LAST few minutes of waiting were the worst. All week long she had been able to act indifferent—unconcerned. Up until an hour ago, she had almost convinced herself that she was completely immune to the comments and speculation going around the dorm about her.

But now, sitting in the anti-room waiting for the inevitable summons which would come from behind the dark mahogany door, she wished, hoped, and even prayed a little, that the door might never open; that the whole ugly mess might be forgotten; that everything . . .

There's no use imagining things now, she thought bitterly. With a quick, nervous gesture, she reached for her purse and knocked it off her lap. The cigarettes she had wanted slid a few feet across the floor, and the stopped, waiting to be retrieved.

"When you can't even win out over a pack of cigarettes, it's about time to quit," she mumbled, and standing up impatiently, she began to walk toward them. As she glanced once again at the mahogany door, something about it seemed familiar—then she remembered. It was almost an exact replica of her dorm's front door. She returned to the chair; the cigarettes lay on the floor completely forgotten; only the frown on her face indicated her thoughts.

That very first day, after the cab driver had seen her inside, and the thick dark brown door had shut behind her, she felt a tinge of loneliness, for the reception office was empty, and seemed as deserted as she felt.

From somewhere a voice called out, "You, the new girl?"

The words 'new girl' started a feeling of shyness and uncertainity inside her, and immediately she assumed a defensive, almost overly protective, aloof attitude—an attitude she had never entirely been able shrug off.

As a result, in a very unnatural voice she answered back, "Yes, I'm Patricia Long."

"We've been expecting you since noon," the friendly voice continued. "The train was late, I'll bet—well, all the girls are having dinner, so you'll have to excuse meeting them while their mouths are full. Come on!"

A short, plump girl bounded in the door, and with a friendly gesture, she took Pat's hand and half dragged her down a small side hallway. Pat held her breath for a moment until the room full of laughing faces and bright colors stopped swimming before her eyes. The girls seemed to be in the midst of some song, but she miserably watched them stop in the middle of a line and stare curiously at her.

I dread meeting total strangers. Why didn't I enter fall quarter—by now I'd be sitting there singing, but oh, no—here it is spring quarter, with everybody knowing everybody, except me. I think—

"Now gang," Leslie Harris, the girl she had met in the office, yelled, "This is Pat, Pat Long."

Sitting there in the Dean of Women's small waiting room, Pat couldn't help but smile as she recalled her confused embarrassment and inability to greet the girls she was to live with—girls she hoped would become her friends.

THAT first night wasn't so bad, come to think of it. Everyone had gone out of her way to be nice. There was that crazy Barbara with the southern drawl. She kept popping in and out of the room flinging "you alls and honey childs" all over the place. She had a way to making everyone laugh, when she wanted to, and so the get-acquainted party started off with a bang.

Sue, the engaged one, immediately took her brother Bob's picture to be some romantic steady and seemed let down to find that Pat didn't go with anyone. Then someone had jokingly told Sue that if she had Pat's figure, she too, could afford to play the field. Even that indirect complement made Pat's spirits zoom. And with everyone talking and laughing around her she couldn't have been happier.

"Shorty" found out she liked skiing and for a while the conversation was monopolized by the skiers in the room. More kids dropped in, some even brought food, so the party continued. Then, suddenly, for no apparent reason, her roommate,

Nan, joined in, and within a few minutes had every eye on her. She yelled, screamed, made faces, or abruptly changed moods and became very serious, talking, then, in a deep monotone. No one in the room could begin to compete with her for the center of attention, so no one tried.

At first, Pat didn't know what to make of it. During the early part of the evening, Nan, pajama-clad, had sprawled silently, almost sullenly on her bed, speaking only when she absolutely had to. Aside from saying, "from Iowa, huh?," when they were first introduced, Pat hadn't heard her utter a longer phrase, until she suddenly transformed herself into the life of the party.

HOW WAS I to know it was all an act? After the lights were out, and we lay there in silence—did she expect me to know right away that she wasn't the gay, flippant type at all?

Pat blushed from mortification even now as she thought back to what had happened next, on that first night in the dorm.

Something had rattled in several pieces to the floor, and in an attempt to imitate what she believed to be Nan's keep-them-laughing personality, Pat laughingly had said—"drop your watch?" And quickly the husky, sullen reply came back and filled the dark room, "Sorry, it was my rosary."

After two months, I still can't really say I know her. Pat squirmed uncomfortably in the chair facing the closed door. The cigarettes were, as before, on the floor, so Pat, very determinedly, went over and picked them up and lit one. As she slowly inhaled, she counted the things she know about Nan. . . . One—she's interested in dramatics. Two—she's interested in athletics. So what? I could have found that out by asking someone. Maybe she's just not the type that forms very close friends, but somehow I doubt that. Maybe it's the fact that I never really act my self around her—for some reason she always puts me on the defensive. We're always arguing or fighting about something—and the trouble is; I can never tell when she's being serious or merely putting on. . . .

"Aw, come on Pat," Leslie was saying as she danced around in an ill-fitting pair or black leotards. "You'll love this basic dancing class. Sometimes we do things like—uh, trying to stand on one leg and bend over backward—and then again this is, ouch!—a cinch. Try as she would, plump Les couldn't sit down cross-legged and touch her elbows on the floor in front. "Well, maybe this isn't so good, but just wait . . . !" With this the dark complected girl assumed a mock arrogant, accomplished pose—"I'll have it mastered in two weeks, bet?"

Pat didn't bet her. Six years of ballet had taught her, the hard way, that exercises aren't perfected in two weeks. Still, it sounded like fun and she had been about to join the class, when Nan bounded in — her short blond hair mussed up and paint all over her clothes from working back stage.

"Could you spare all the clothes, Les? For a minute there I thought you were my roommate learning to be a striptease."

She knew I would have looked good in that outfit—why then—Pat momentarily stared down at her own trim figure and pictured herself moving rapidly in time with an old ballet piece. Then, abruptly, her eyes swung back to the closed mahogany door. In a way it reminded her of Nan's body. Built square and solid, on the order of those Russian women pictured working in the fields. Though solid, from the many sports she played, she didn't have prominent muscles, just smooth light skin that blended in with her blond hair. Her face, instead of being blunt and heavy like those in the Red posters, was always expressive and alive; and while not beautiful, had a certain pixie quality about it that made her always interesting to watch. But only in certain unguarded moments like in church or when she was asleep did anyone ever get an absolutely unmasked glimpse of her. Because for the most part, Nan's face looked as though it belonged on a billboard. You know the type—one in which the girl is madly driving a convertible without getting anywhere; and without ever once enjoying the cigarette that stays stiffly posed between two perfectly shaped lips.

AFTER awhile it got to the point where everything they did or thought was exactly opposite. Nan went for radical, different clothes—Pat concentrated on the quieter styles and colors. Nan left things as they fell, while, meticulously, Pat kept herself and the room (her half, anyway), as spotless as possible.

The one thing that Pat could never figure out though, was when Nan slept. Somebody was always in the room until about midnight or after, and then she would study sometimes till three in the morning. If it wasn't the girl from

right below, who stuck rubber spiders all over the walls and read horror stories by the hour, it was Joe, the easy-going red-head who could sit and listen to records *ad infinitum,* or someone else.

Puzzled, Pat knew she liked all those kids, but it got so she resented their presence—every time they came into the room, which was just about all the time, she would withdraw to her own bed or some corner, and not even try to become a part of the group. It got to be an instinctive reaction, so that by now they just frankly ignored her. Any friendliness they showed at the beginning, she knew she had coldly refused, yet she couldn't help thinking that they were partly at fault.

The whole situation that awaited her in the dean's office began as a result of one of those "parties" in their room. Someone had dared Nan to sneak out of the dorm and get a piece of pie from a girl friend's house in town.

"Okay, give me a half-hour," Nan quipped. "And we'll all share the pie."

Forty-five minutes went by; then an hour and fifteen. Finally, an hour and a half later, Nan returned bruised, cut, and cold, but victorious. She had the pie. Getting out by way of a first floor window had proved a little easier than trying to climb back in, and Pat remembered that Nan went to bed a little earlier than usual that night.

The next morning Nan was called into the house mother's apartment. The house mother didn't come right out and accuse her of breaking the curfew, but let her know that someone had slipped somewhere.

Sure, and right away they thought it was me, because I had warned Nan against going and had told all of them the whole plan was stupid, and most likely wouldn't work. They immediately excused themselves from any blame, picking me as the only possible guilty one. Actually neither the house mother nor any other person in charge seemed to have any definite proof, only suspicions.

ALL THOSE in the room had been questioned by the dean during the week. Now it was Pat's turn to answer questions. The rest of the kids had sworn up and down that they had left nothing slip, so the final outcome was up to Pat. Any minute now, the Dean of Women, in whose outer-office Pat now sat, would call her in and ask her for an account of that night.

Why should I even bother to lie? They think I've already said something. Angrily, Pat shook the cigarette package—only one left. The half burned stubs, filling the ash-tray at her side, betrayed the false calmness she had been trying to assume. If they had just shown a little confidence in me or something. No, everyone condemned me right from the start. They all had their two-bits worth ready to tell me; all that is except—Pat straightened in her chair, a match half-way to the cigarette, went out as she dropped her hand—except Nan! All week long, while everyone else had been telling, warning, or advising her, she had been silent—never once saying one word about it. So what does that prove? Probably she's so mad she can't bring herself to talk to me. If she had sneaked out to meet some guy, well that would have been different—but all she went out for—damn! Why can't I light this cigarette?

Steading her hand, she lit the cigarette. As the smoke slowly curled toward the ceiling, Pat watched it while her mind slowly formed the words: *just some pie.*

"Patricia Long?" The mahogany door opened. "You may come in now." The matured voice of the dean entered the anti-room, interrupting Pat's thoughts and startling her a little. She fumbled for her purse momentarily, then stopped; looking through the open door into the office, she could see a corner of a desk, on it was an ash-tray. Thinking more determinedly than she had all day, Pat decided to finish her smoke in there. With that she quickly rose; crossed the room, and walked into the office, shutting the thick dark brown door behind her.

We Beat Lewis & Clark Down the Yellowstone

by **Ken Byerly**

From Lewistown. Mr. Byerly is a junior majoring in journalism.

Actually the title to this story isn't quite true. We didn't beat Lewis and Clark down the Yellowstone, we just beat Clark. The explorers split in June of 1806 at the present site of Three Forks, Montana, when returning from the Pacific. Lewis rafted down the Missouri and Clark's party crossed Bozeman pass to the present site of Livingston, and paddled down the Yellowstone. They met in August where the latter river flows into the Missouri just north of today's Sidney, Montana.

Clark did the 115 road miles separating Livingston from Billings, or by his own estimation, 244 miles on the twisting river—in five days of actual travel. We did it in three and one-half days.

The idea came to four of us as we talked in the halls of Fergus County high school in Lewistown during the cold winter of 1951. We wanted adventure. The Missouri river, which flows within 50 miles of Lewistown, would have been the logical choice for our river trip except that its muddy, sluggish waters flowed through some of the most desolate country in the United States. We chose the Yellowstone not only for its clear, rapidly moving waters, but for the numerous towns dotted along its banks.

The four of us, Vern Roemmich 16, Hanes Byerly 16, Ron Erickson 17, and myself 17, had visions of a balmy Tom Sawyer existence in roomy, easily steered rafts. I dug out Clark's journal from the school library shelves and copied it. On the trip it became our guide book and tourist map.

High Noon and the Start

It was high noon under a crystal clear Montana sky when we shoved off from under the railroad bridge at Livingston on August 15. We were exhilarated as the current caught our two rafts, roped about 30 feet apart, and spun us into midstream. Our equipment and food were packed under water-tight canvas in the mid-sections of the rafts and Mae West life preservers lay close at hand.

The Absarokee mountains cradled Livingston behind us and brush and trees lined the rocky banks. Clark described the stream here as, "swift, cold, deep and rocky." How right he was! No sooner had we rounded the first bend than we were in trouble. Like the dog on leash who runs around the opposite side of a tree from his master, our rafts were swept around the butt end of a huge cottonwood near the right bank. Vern and I in the first and smaller raft crashed into the limbs further down the tree while Ron and Hanes were caught near the butt. Ron leaped out to untangle the ropes and Hanes chopped the rope with his hatchet. Both rafts were spun through the maze of branches by the swirling current and into the open. Ron barely caught the end of their raft as it swung away and clung precariously to it as he was whipped through the water. Hanes broke a paddle and Vern lost one of ours in the melee. Hanes finally beached their raft on an outcrop of land allowing the dripping and cold Ron to get back in his seat, while Vern and I pursued our lost paddle for several hundred yards before catching it. At last we tied the rafts together again, much closer this time, and with added respect for the river, drifted on.

To keep our rafts safe, we had to paddle most of the time. The current had a tendency to shove us into the banks on turns and, if we wished to land, we had to start working in several hundred yards upstream. Rapids were an ordeal, for we had to keep the rafts pointed straight ahead to keep from capsizing.

We hit our first rapids about 3 p.m. and continued in rough water until black clouds started piling up, blotting out the late afternoon light. When a cool wind started to whip up the water and lightning streaked the horizon, we pulled in to a tree-covered knoll. As we were beaching the rafts the rain hit with a howl, followed soon by driving hail. We huddled behind the cotton-

woods for protection until the hail stopped and the sun burst out for several minutes before sinking behind the hills of the south bank.

We camped there in the thick grass after eating a cold supper and searched Clark's diary in the waning light for hints on what to expect ahead. Clark had noticed great quantities of beaver around the entrance of the Shields river. We hadn't even noticed the Shields river. Clark observed great herds of elk and two bears over our first days course. We had seen small herds of cattle and two pigs.

Our first night was a comfortable one. We dried our gear in the early morning sunlight, stowed it, pumped up the rafts a little with our leaky tire pump and shoved off with Hanes and Ron in the end boat and Vern and I in the lead raft.

The towering Absarokees seemed only a few miles to our right and huge waves bounded over glistening rocks to our left. Evading the worst of the rapids, we began our first full day of travel. Soon we were swept into open country and suddenly the cloud-flecked summits of the nearly vertical Crazy mountains loomed to our left. The river twisted between craggy cliffs split here and there by streams of water which wet us with spray.

Shooting the Rapids

As we neared Big Timber a shout from the banks caught our attention. "Look out for the rapids around the next bend," a fisherman shouted. "They'll cut your boats to pieces."

When the hollow roar ahead warned us, we pulled into shore to attempt a portage. But when we walked the rafts around the next bend, we were confronted by a stone cliff. "We'll have to shoot the rapids," Vern said and we piled into our rafts.

In a matter of seconds, the first huge waves hit us, lifting and dropping the rafts in sickening rhythm. As we neared the worst, white-crested waves buffeted us from all sides pouring icy streams of water over us and our equipment. Only by keeping the rafts headed straight downstream with frantic paddling did we avoid capsizing. You can imagine the sensation of rising on a crest of water until it seemed the rafts would surely tip for lack of support and then sliding down until walls of water cut off all view of the surrounding country.

"We made it," Hanes sighed as the waves grew smaller and the rocks to each side faded from view. Ten minutes later found us under the highway bridge at Big Timber. Cans and rubbish littered the bank and a dead pig flavored the atmosphere. We walked the mile into town and brought back fresh supplies. After resting for two hours and drawing a crowd of interested onlookers, we were off again.

Clark mentioned in his diary two streams entering close to the present site of Big Timber, one from the north and one from the south. We found the Big Timber river entering from the north but only dusty cottonwoods and a dry ravine indicated the Boulder river. The towering Crazy's were now behind us and the Absarokees were blending into the horizon.

Wilderness and Civilization

Next we entered a stretch of open country where Clark saw, "uncountable herds of buffalo," and we enjoyed smooth water most of the afternoon. However, a rock irrigation dam above Greycliff nearly caused a disaster. We were swept on the jagged rocks of the dam before we could beach the rafts. As the rest of us climbed out to direct the rafts, Vern and both rafts were swept on over and downstream. Hurriedly, we dived into the water below the dam and swam up to the boats where Vern had beached them. Heaving a sign of relief, we hopped in and had just shoved off into the current when we heard a shout, "Hey, wait for me!" We turned to see Vern sitting on the bank where he had been nursing a cut on his foot. Somewhat gleefully we fought against the current while Vern swam down to us. After carefully counting noses, we were on our way again.

Several times during the afternoon the burning sun drove us into the river and the icy water drove us back out again. It was an endless cycle. For the remainder of our stay on the river, cloudless skies and the August sun tormented us.

We camped for the night on a large island several miles below Greycliff in country which Clark described as, "Dotted with piny and rocky hills, many of which extended to the water's edge." We were surrounded by lush cottonwoods and willows circled by deer tracks and beaver sign. Clark reported many elk, buffalo and bears in this vicinity. We saw only a few tracks and a great deal of bird life.

After cooking a large supper, we sat around the fire spinning tall tales and watching the reflection of the moon creep over the surging river. We had come a great distance during the day.

The river was growing slightly muddy and contained much more water than at Big Timber. Altho mosquitos attacked from every angle and we devised methods of escaping their stings and the night was probably the most comfortable of the trip.

Off early next morning under a crystal clear sky, we looked where Clark had mentioned sighting old Indian forts on some of the numerous islands. Apparently flood waters or a change in the channel had ended their existence.

At the entrance of Lower Deer creek, which Clark called Beaver creek, the water entering the river was of a milk color for several 100 yards. Clark had noted this same fact in his diary 150 years before.

About 11:30 a.m. a large pipe greeted us with a smell that indicated we were passing the sewer outlet of Reed Point. The day became unbearably hot and we were well sunburned. We lunched on an island above Columbus and later discovered Hanes had left his only pair of shoes there.

About 2 p.m. we entered Columbus hungry and thirsty. Hanes was an object of attention strolling the streets barefooted. He is 6′ 2″ and lanky, and we overheard whispered comments like, "Got to wear shoes in town, Lukey." We replenished our food supply and shoved off.

Clark mentioned more Indian forts and a lot of snags for this portion of the river. We found the snags but no forts. Clark also reported sighting great herds of buffalo in the area but an absence of deer and elk, perhaps because of the dryness of the country.

We camped near sundown about 10 miles below Columbus on a grassy shelf jutting out from a pine covered cliff. The Beartooth mountains, streaked with snow, had come into view and could be seen far to the south. Mosquitos swarmed everywhere as the sun fell behind the piny knolls.

We were on the river early the next morning and passed Laurel about noon after completely missing Park City. Here we learned from a fisherman that there was a body in the river with us, someone who had drowned in Yellowstone park at the headwaters of the river and was believed to be in our vicinity. He was found two days later below Billings.

The river was swift and dangerous but we encountered no new thrills. We passed the site where Clark and his men had paused to make their canoes and the bottoms where he observed great numbers of wolves and buffalo.

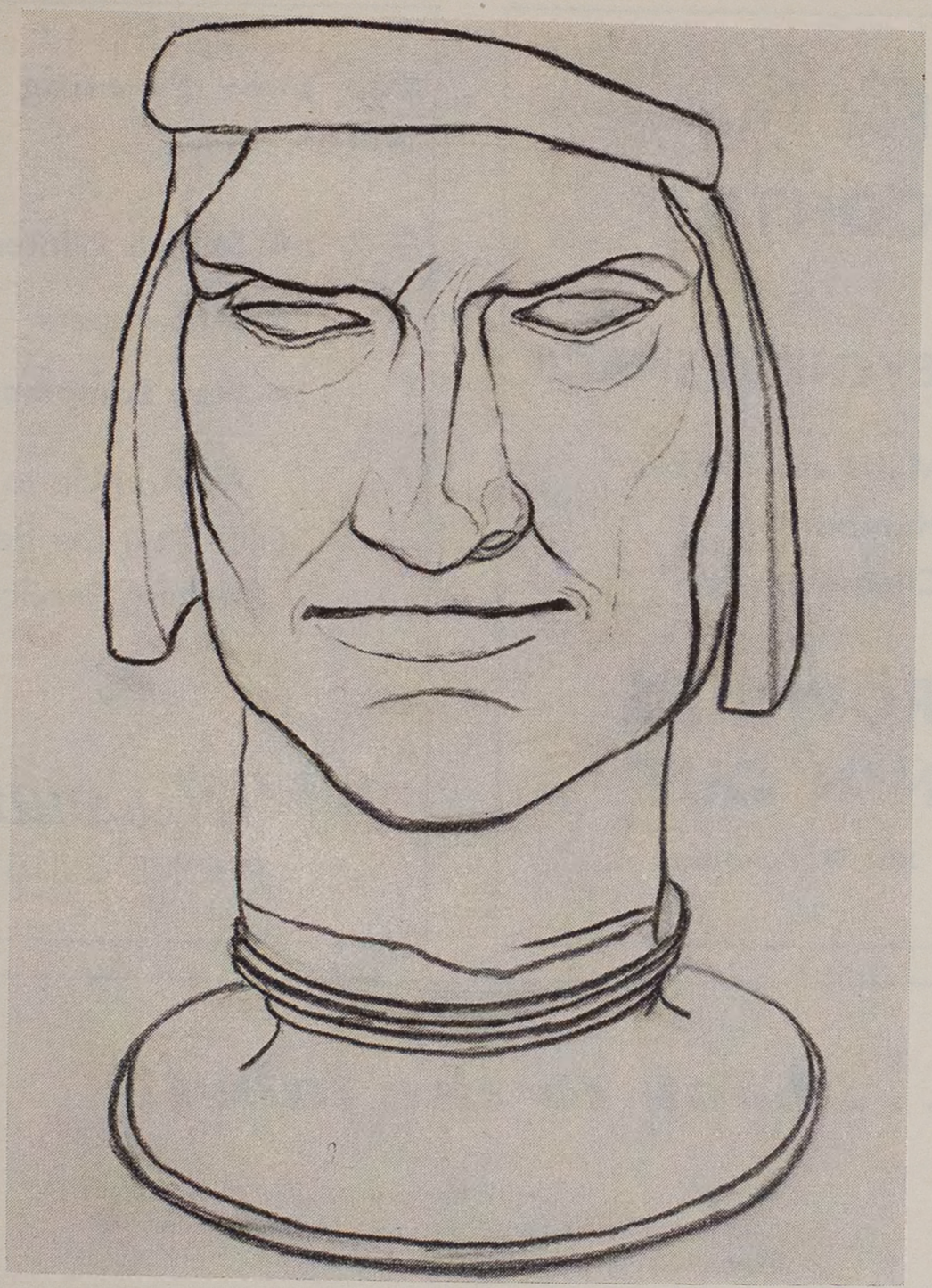
As we drifted under the bridge at Laurel, we were met by a fusilade of rocks from several dirty-faced little Montanans. We sighted a deer on an island just below. It was a doe and we gazed at it fascinated until the relentless current bore us out of sight.

Three miles above Billings, we encountered the scaffolding of a bridge under construction We aimed the lead raft for one of the narrow openings between the two-by-fours dipping into the water and paddled our hardest to hit it. Ron and I in the lead raft made it, but Hanes and Vern's raft smacked around one of the planks with a shriek and a wailing of rubber. For the second time of the trip, Hanes axed the rope and both rafts shot through. We had been so close to the construction that afterwards we found nails, bits of wood and even a half-eaten sandwich in our boats.

Once more we roped the rafts together and rode easy water until one last stretch of rapids just outside Billings. The Midland fair was in full swing and we could see the ferris wheel whisking its yelling passengers around.

We landed underneath the highway bridge of the Billings-Miles City road, on a beach littered with broken glass and empty cans. A sewer outlet flowed in just above, covering the water with a skim of oil and debris. Cars rumbled overhead and two bums watched from their perch on a bridge support as we packed our equipment to ride home with Dad.

Ah civilization!



Cast Drawing by Robert Haight